THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF SPATIAL PATTERNING: A TEST CASE FROM THE MAGNOLIA QUARTERS IN NATCHITOCHES PARISH, LOUISIANA

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department

of Comparative Cultural Studies

University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Bachelor of Arts

By

Paige E. Hill

May, 2019

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ABSTRACT

The possibility of a link between the culture of early enslaved Africans and African Americans and their original culture in West Africa has long been debated. The 'gang' and 'task' system of labor proposed by Philip Morgan suggests that the enslaved on plantations in the southeastern United States created their own culture with heavy African influence because of the absent plantation owners and overseers. In contrast, the enslaved on plantations in the central southern United States were unable to create their own culture and acculturated into European American culture, according to Morgan. Excavations carried out at the Magnolia Plantation quarters in Natchitoches, Louisiana by Dr. Kenneth L. Brown have revealed sub-floor deposits within the quarters that seem to mimic concepts found in the West African BaKongo Cosmogram or Crossroads Symbol. The excavations also seem to indicate that there was a conscious choice by the later tenant farmer population to place the kitchen or 'public interaction' space in the northernmost room of two-room cabins and commercial craft activities in the southern room once a single family took over both rooms in the 1900s. This choice by the tenant farmer population at Magnolia is mirrored by the modern Gullah and Geechee cultures of the southeastern United States, descendants of enslaved communities in that area who have many ideological and material ties to West African cultures.

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Background and Problem

Enslavement in North America has been a source of contention and intense study across various fields; history, sociology, psychology, and anthropology, to name a few. It has been examined over time for various reasons: first as merely a side-note to the inhabitants of the Big House - the plantation owner's house - then with a bit more focus on the culture of the enslaved population and their interactions with European American culture, and, more recently, examining the possibility of cultural ideas in enslaved culture that had their origins in West Africa. The basic historical idea that propelled these studies, including the more recent attempt to challenge the idea, is that historical evidence has been interpreted to imply that the enslaved African and African American populations *acculturated to* (were forced to adopt the culture of) the dominant European American culture. This historical evidence being sources that were almost always written by European Americans, and so bearing a heavy bias when discussing the enslaved and their customs. Based on these sources, the idea of the enslaved and later tenant farmer populations having their own culture, based on original African customs or a cultural evolution of similar ideas, has been dismissed because of the omnipresence of the European American owners and overseers. One supporting hypothesis to this argument is based on the belief that the systems of labor theory developed and discussed by Philip Morgan, a British historian who focused on the colonial and antebellum United States. Morgan says that there are two main labor systems utilized by antebellum plantations, the 'gang' system and 'task' system (Morgan 1982).

The 'gang' system is what most comes to mind when one thinks of enslavement on a plantation. According to Morgan, this system appeared most frequently on plantations in the

central southern United States; the overseers broke up the enslaved into groups of five to ten or more, and the enslaved completed their duties on rotation, working from dawn to dusk. Overseers watched sometimes three to four groups each, depending on the size of the plantation's enslaved population. The women and children performed somewhat easier, but still strenuous, labor. Because the work endured for the entire day, once the work was completed there would have been very little time for the enslaved to interact with one another while unsupervised, according to Morgan, and therefore a 'sophisticated' culture would not have been able to form in the slave quarters (Morgan 1982).

The other system, the 'task' system, appeared mainly in the southeastern United States - along the Georgia and Carolina coasts, as well as the Sea Islands. In the 'task' system, the enslaved would have a set of chores to do, or a specific plot of land to work based on the age and sex of the enslaved laborer. The only 'requirement' was that all the enslaved have their assigned work completed by the end of the day. At the end of the day, the overseer - who often lived on a house relatively remote to the plantation - would stop by and check that the day's work had been done, and then return to his remote house. This meant that southeastern plantations had less of a European American presence, giving the enslaved a relative degree of 'freedom' in the expression of their culture. Further, according to Morgan, the time available to the enslaved after their chores were completed was used to create a unique and African-esque culture (Morgan 1982).

Morgan's hypothesis is now considered by some in anthropology to have a major weakness. Anthropologically, his assumption that people who have very little time to themselves are incapable of forming a 'sophisticated' culture, let alone any kind of unique culture, has been

questioned (Brown 2018). Morgan's theory is somewhat ethnocentric, that is, Morgan comes from a European background and is making assertions about a different culture merely from an academic perspective without doing archaeological or ethnohistorical research into the cultures of plantation quarters. In addition, Morgan does not discuss how cultures like the Gullah can offer insight into what those past cultures were like, and the possibility that aspects of or practices from those cultures endure today.

Nevertheless, Morgan's theory is still considered relevant due to the modern-day culture that inhabits an area - the Carolina Lowcountry - where this 'task' system was utilized. This unique cultural group is known as the Gullah in South Carolina and the Geechee in Georgia - both of them being direct descendants of enslaved populations from plantations in those areas. The enslaved populations in those areas had so little outside influence that it is theorized that their present-day culture is thought to resemble the way the enslaved on the local plantations practiced their culture. This is believed to be because plantations in the coastal region of the southeastern United States operated differently from how plantations in the rest of the slaveholding states operated. In addition to the labor systems presented by Morgan, he notes that the owners of plantations in the southeastern United States were often absent, and did not live on the plantation itself (Morgan 1982). The reasons for this are varied, but include the high rate of malaria - which affected the European American population far more than the Africans and African Americans, who had some degree of immunity to the disease by virtue of their 'African biological' inheritance. These diseases were spread by mosquitoes in the swampy climate, one that was conducive to growing rice, which was the most popular and crucial crop in that area. Another reason for the remote owners could have been the relative isolation and distance from

urban centers; because of the rampant disease, very few large cities were built that far into the southeast, which made it harder to get luxury goods or associate with members of the 'upper class.'

One of the fundamental beliefs in Gullah culture is that the kitchen is the center of a household. The presence of a kitchen defined a household; even if two families are living in the same house, if they shared the same kitchen space, then they are considered as one household (Guthrie 1996). Throughout the Carolina Lowcountry, whenever possible, the kitchen is situated in the northernmost area of the house. It has been argued that this placement goes back to an originally West African belief in the BaKongo Cosmogram, also known as the Crossroads Symbol (Brown 2011, 2015, 2018, Ferguson 1990). The Crossroads Symbol represents a ritual symbol in West African cultures, used mainly when trying to communicate with the spirit world, as a call to have the ancestors present for rituals, or as a way to ensure participants in a legal dispute would tell the truth or risk suffering the consequences of lying with such a powerful symbol present (Fennell 2003). The Crossroads Symbol is thought to be a more widespread version of this BaKongo Cosmogram, either simplified from the more complex drawn design, or as a way to preserve this practice while remaining mainly undetected by European American outsiders, as the meanings connected to each of the cardinal directions represented by the four arms of the symbols.

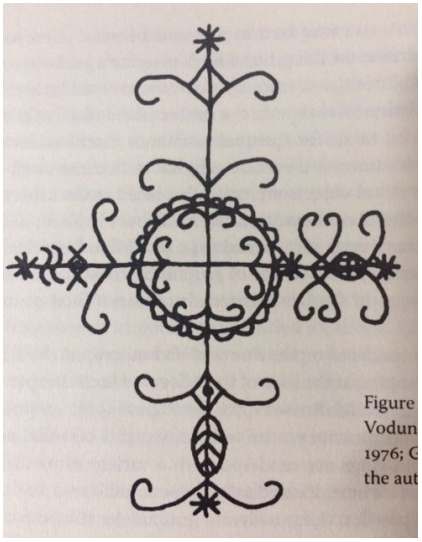


Figure 1.1 A vèvè of Simbi, one of the Haitian loas (gods.) It is reminiscent of the BaKongo Cosmogram, as are many similar symbols from enslaved populations in the Caribbean area. (Symbol drawn by Christopher C. Fennell, in 'Crossroads and Cosmologies,' page 90.)

Figure 1.2 A picture of community members from Freedman's Town in Fort Worth, Texas, during a celebration of the town's founding. On the partial brick street can be seen a form of the BaKongo Cosmogram, showing that its use is not limited to the southeastern United States and the Caribbean. (Photograph courtesy of Crystal Granger.)

The four points of the Crossroads Symbol relate to four stages of a person's life and the four cardinal directions, starting with the East and rotating in a counterclockwise movement: the East which symbolizes birth into the physical world, then North as someone's height of power in the physical world, West as the birth into the spirit world or death, and South as a person's height of power in the spirit world, before finally going around again to the East in a continuous cycle. The counterclockwise movement around the symbol is related to the travel of the sun.

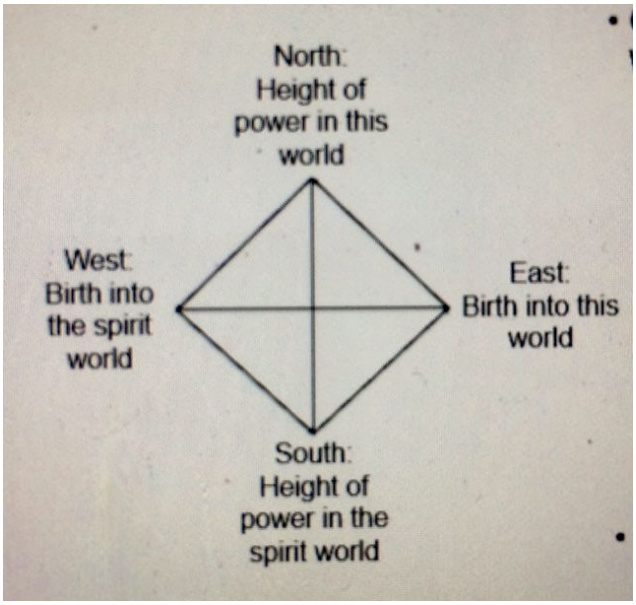


Figure 1.3 A diagram of the Crossroads Symbol with stages of life linked to the cardinal directions. (Taken from PowerPoint 'The Archaeology of Spatial Patterning: A Test Case from the Magnolia Quarters in Natchitoches, Louisiana' by Paige Hill, archived at the University of Houston Libraries.)

References to this Crossroads Symbol are common throughout Gullah culture, both ideologically and physically. Connections to the Crossroads Symbol are found in and beneath churches, praise houses, and curer's cabins in those areas (Brown 2015, 2018, Brown and Cooper 1990). In addition, multiple artifacts with an equilateral cross or diamond shape are

found in association with the Gullah. The ambiguity of the Crossroads Symbol would have been advantageous to enslaved populations because in its most limited design, it is an equilateral cross. To an outsider, any markings of this symbol on buildings or smaller, wearable artifacts would probably have looked like a cross, a symbol used in Christianity and many other belief systems. This would have fulfilled a purpose for the enslaved as they could wear and utilize a symbol that had a deeper meaning to them, and in a way could throw off some actions of the European American owners by practicing their own culture in a way that was completely undetectable. In addition, for the European American owners and overseers it seemed like the enslaved were adopting Christianity or another form of western belief, and therefore were becoming easier to control. This 'hidden in plain sight' concept is one of the important foundations in the argument for the use of the Crossroads Symbol as an African retention (Brown 2018).

Because the Gullah culture today is in some ways similar to that practiced by the original enslaved inhabitants, and there was little input from European American culture with the owners and overseers often absent, it is hypothesized that Gullah culture is similar to West African culture (Brown 2018, Guthrie 1996). This has been somewhat proven in recent years, as practices and artifacts from modern-day Sierra Leone have been found to be almost identical to those practices and artifacts found in Gullah culture (*Family Across the Sea* 1991, film). The documentary-style film showed representatives from Sierra Leone and the Gullah culture visiting each other, and commenting on and examining the similarities between the two cultures (1991).

Because of the similarities present between the Gullah culture and some traditional West African cultures, the possibility exists that enslaved populations in other areas of the United

States had a similar way of enacting and practicing culture. A majority of people sold into the slave trade came from West Africa for a variety of reasons, such as knowledge of how to grow rice, relative ease of buying captives caught by larger African tribes who brought them to the coast for trade, etc. This means that a large majority of enslaved people came from a relatively similar cultural area. There were - and are - over 2,000 unique cultures within the broader 'West Africa' area, but they do have some similarities ideologically. Theoretically, it is possible for a group of people from a dissimilar area, when forced into extremely harsh conditions, to band together and create a society that they are all capable of understanding and practicing. In this way, elements from all the various potential background locations and tribes could be incorporated into one 'culture' that everyone could practice and have some semblance of 'normalcy' and cultural teaching.

This thesis will look at the presence of the Crossroads Symbol on the Magnolia Plantation in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, and if this ideological principle impacted how the enslaved and later tenants organized and practiced their daily lives. The Magnolia Plantation had 24 two-room cabins in the quarters, with two families per cabin - one per room. Today, only seven and half cabins remain standing. After the late 1890s, as some families moved out to reside in houses closer to the lands they farmed and became sharecroppers or tenant farmers, those who stayed expanded within the cabins, and a single family took over both rooms in a given cabin.

If the hypothesis that similar cultures exist in central Louisiana and the Gullah area is correct, then there should be a marked difference between the way the two rooms were utilized by a single family. The Gullah display a cultural practice of room division based on use, and also have cultural beliefs similar to what is found in the BaKongo Cosmogram/Crossroads Symbol.

According to statements about this symbol and the practices of the Gullah based on that symbol (Guthrie 1996), it should be expected that in a similar culture, like the one being examined at the Magnolia Plantation, then the kitchen or 'public interaction' center of a household would be located in the more northern room of the two rooms. This relates to the meaning of the direction North in the BaKongo Cosmogram: North represents a person's height of power in the physical world and community, and the kitchen is regarded as the center and definition of a household and how that household interacts with the community, at least in the Gullah and Geechee cultures. This utilization of rooms by an enslaved population, from an outsider's perspective, would also have been subtle enough that someone with no knowledge of West African customs would have no idea about the deeper meaning of this cultural practice, therefore taking no issue with it. This would allow the enslaved and later tenant farmers to practice their culture unnoticed.

To examine this hypothesis, artifacts excavated from beneath the floors of two cabins from the quarters of the Magnolia Plantation will be compared statistically to see if an observable difference in room usage emerges based on artifact deposition. If the kitchen is located in the northern room, then one would expect to find more 'kitchen'-related artifacts in that area compared to the southern room. This includes artifacts such as ceramics, tableware, silverware, butchered bone, and other similar artifacts. By contrast, more personal items such as clothing-related items and toys would be found in the southern room. If true, this pattern of placing the kitchen in the northernmost room of the cabins would provide a definite link between practices used by the Gullah and Geechee cultures in the southeastern United States and a tenant

farmer population - with heavy influences from the previously enslaved population - of a plantation in the central southern United States.

One of the common problems regarding the archaeology of the African Diaspora today is the assertion that because the findings on central southern plantations do not appear to yield a visually vivid and African-influenced culture like the Gullah, then the enslaved on plantations outside of the southeastern United States did not have their own culture, and merely acculturated to the European American culture (Morgan 1982). This thesis will attempt to challenge that assertion. By using comparisons from the Gullah culture, the possibility of a cultural link between common room utilization practices found among the Gullah and the practices used in the slave quarters at the Magnolia Plantation in Natchitoches, Louisiana will be examined.

Chapter 2

Archaeological and Ethnographic Evidence

The Gullah as a cultural group have fascinated cultural anthropologists and historians alike for many years. Their unique culture and behavior have led to numerous studies and ethnographies being conducted into their cultural patterns and hypotheses about how similar their culture is to the culture of enslaved populations in that area abound (Creel 1988, Guthrie 1996). Because of their relative isolation from European American contact, the enslaved people from multiple African cultures were able to form a culture more openly, with less punishment for maintaining the material goods of that culture. “Many scholars maintain that the Sea Islands are the most authentic source of African American history, as they contain many remnants of the slavery experience and traditions of West Africa.” (Guthrie 1996:1)

History of the Gullah

The Carolina lowcountry and Sea Islands were difficult places to live during colonial and antebellum times. The conditions were harsh and dangerous, the heat and humidity were stifling, and mosquitos laden with diseases like malaria were rampant. This presented a major problem for European settlers in the area, who had no immunity to malaria and no experience working in the oppressive heat. “During the hottest seasons, many of the white planters went north, to homes in New England, because it was so hot. Few whites lived there during the summers.” (Guthrie 1996:12) The area, however, was conducive to growing rice, an important crop for early North America. Because the European Americans did not want to work in such an environment to grow the rice, their attentions soon turned to the slave trade for a labor force to grow rice.

Several tribes in West Africa were known for growing rice; for some - like those in coastal Senegambia and Sierra Leone - their culture was based around rice as the staple food. Landowners in the colonial south highly desired members of these West African tribes as they already had the knowledge of how to grow rice, had some degree of immunity to malaria and other diseases common in the area, and were accustomed to the climate, which resembled some of the biomes in West Africa. With these 'desirable' qualities, millions of West African people - as well as a smattering of those labelled by greedy traders as being from Senegambia, the area between and around Senegal and Sierra Leone - were imported to the Carolina lowcountry and Sea Islands. The Gullah trace their heritage to these people.

Enslaved populations in this area had very little contact with European Americans both in general and in comparison to more centrally located enslaved populations (Creel 1988, Guthrie 1996, Morgan 1982). Overseers often only checked to make sure the work was done at the end of the day, and after completing their assigned work the enslaved could do as they wanted. This greater degree of 'freedom' allowed for a much more vibrant and African-rooted culture to form, complete with artifacts, structures, and behaviors that can be traced back to different practices from West Africa. "Because their isolation precluded direct exposure to mass Euro-American influences, Sea Island Gullahs offer evidence of significant combinations of traditional retentions, American acculturation, and intergroup socialization." (Creel 1988:15)

Why the enslaved in this area seemed to have more African retentions than enslaved populations in other areas is an interesting question that so far has no well-supported answer. The general consensus at the moment seems to be that a combination of both the lack of/limited influence of European American culture on the enslaved populations and the lack of direct

punishment for having more African items or behavior visible encouraged the culture in this area to grow with little limitations (Morgan 1982).

Another proposed reason the cultures of the Gullah and earlier enslaved populations from that area and the central south differ so much are the work systems as proposed by Morgan. The two main work systems used in the United States, the 'gang' system and the 'task' system, were utilized depending on the various types of crops grown on plantations and had very different structures. The system was often chosen based on the crop, with more work-intensive crops - mainly short-staple cotton - using the 'gang' system.

Some anthropologists say that because the enslaved in 'task' systems had more time to themselves, they were able to come up with their own culture (Brown, personal communication, 2018). On the other hand, those enslaved populations working in a 'gang' system did not have time between working hours to 'create' culture. This argument has multiple problems. First, it assumes that humans need large amounts of time to themselves in order to 'intentionally create' a culture. Second, it passively asserts that the enslaved in a 'gang' system were so exhausted at the end of the work day that they were incapable of doing anything other than eating and sleeping, since talking with, interacting with, cooking for, or helping out others could be taken as 'evolving a culture.' Proponents of this argument say that the enslaved in a 'gang' system would return to the quarters after working all day, eat, sleep, and wake up the next morning to do the same thing, too exhausted to vary this pattern or create their own form of society or religion to turn to (Morgan 1982). People who support this argument say that creating a culture requires copious amounts of free time, something the enslaved populations in a 'gang' system did not have.

A counter-argument to the fact that there are more visibly African American cultures in areas that utilized a 'task' system than a 'gang' system is the lack of direct European American influence. Without an omnipresent owner or overseer, the enslaved could have aspects of their culture more openly visible. In a 'gang' system, where the enslaved were almost constantly watched, any 'Africanisms' or behavior would have been immediately stopped and punished. Any visible artifacts or materials that were perceived to be African in origin would have been destroyed, and the makers/owners of the item punished. The reduced fear of persecution in the 'task' system of labor lends itself to the creation of a more visible and vibrant African American culture.

The Gullah Culture Today

The Gullah today still have a very vibrant culture, with many studies being done on the similarities to behaviors and items of West African cultures. "Folklorists... have devoted considerable time to the recording of Sea Island Creole [Gullah] songs, practices, and customs, which appear to be African in origin." (Guthrie 1996:15) Because of the relative isolation from European Americans both before and after the Civil War, the culture has remained essentially unchanged since the antebellum period in structure, material, and cultural practices.

Patricia Guthrie conducted an ethnography of the Gullah people, and she found many similarities to West African cultures. One of the most prominent she identified was the concept of 'catching sense.' In a way, catching sense was like a rite of passage or age ritual, where community members of a certain age - usually children around 12 years old - would learn how to become a fully-fledged member of the community (Guthrie 1996). This involved learning how

the community worked, and what one could and should not do; for the Gullah, it usually involved initiation into the local Praise House or church.

Figure 2.1 A praise house on the Sea Islands. Praise houses were - and are - considered to be the spiritual, practical, and cultural center of each 'plantation' community among the Sea Island Gullah. Many praise houses followed this style and size.

The Sea Islands had a number of different plantations all bordering each other, each with their own quarters. Through studying and questioning the local Gullah, Guthrie determined that the practice of 'catching sense,' in addition to being a coming of age rite, also offered a way to form kinship between members of the same plantation (1996). Once a member of the enslaved population had caught sense at one plantation, they remained a part of that community. Even if they married outside their community and moved to another plantation - or were forcibly sold - they were still considered a member of the plantation community where they caught sense. This extended even to having spouses separated at burial, so each could be buried in the graveyard associated with the community where they caught sense (Guthrie 1996).

This cultural concept helped to strengthen bonds between enslaved members of a plantation population. As it is likely that people from a wide variety of African cultures and backgrounds were forced into the same conditions of enslavement, catching sense was a way that they could all feel connected to one another, and teach and learn a similar culture. In addition, it served to create a 'second family' for people who had caught sense; when they were initially separated from their family during the slave trade, or when they were removed from their current plantation population due to marriage outside their community or being sold by the owner, they still belonged to a solid 'family.' This stretched across plantations on part of the Sea Islands and possibly into the Carolina lowcountry. The possibility of it having extended into more centrally southern plantation populations is up for debate, but it requires further study to be conclusive.

Two aspects of Gullah culture are important to this thesis. One of the most crucial aspects is the cultural importance placed on the Crossroads Symbol. In Gullah culture, various ethnographies note that the Crossroads Symbol or equilateral cross is an important symbol. It is noted to have special properties and magical protection qualities (Fennell 2003, Guthrie 1996). The other important cultural aspect is the Gullah definition of a family dwelling. In order for a family to be considered a 'family' by the community, they need to have their own kitchen. If two families share a house with only one kitchen, then they are considered a single 'family.' The kitchen is culturally important as the way that a family interacts with the community; most public interactions with a family take place in the kitchen. Without a kitchen, the family is unable to have these interactions and so is not considered a 'family' by the rest of the community. In most cases, this room is also oriented towards the North.

The presence of the Crossroads Symbol in the community - very possibly a simplified version of the BaKongo Cosmogram - and the orientation of a heavily community-based room being placed in the North could indicate that the Gullah follow a form of the BaKongo Cosmogram in their ideologies about cultural structure. Since the Gullah have remained essentially unchanged since the time of their antebellum predecessors, it is possible that the original enslaved populations followed this trend as well.

BaKongo Cosmogram

The BaKongo cosmogram comes primarily from areas in the south of West Africa. It is a symbol that represents the life-cycle of all humans within the BaKongo culture. It follows the pattern of an equilateral cross - highly ritualistic drawings will also include circles at each arm of the cross and sometimes other adornments - with each arm representing a stage in a person's life. The cycle starts with the right arm, signifying East, and represents a person's birth into the physical world. Going counter-clockwise - mimicking the pattern of the sun - it then goes to the North, as a person's height of power in the physical world. Next is the West as a person's birth into the spirit world, and the South as the person's height of power in the spirit world, before finally going up to the East again in the form of reincarnation or the return of the sun (Brown 2018, Fennell 2010a).

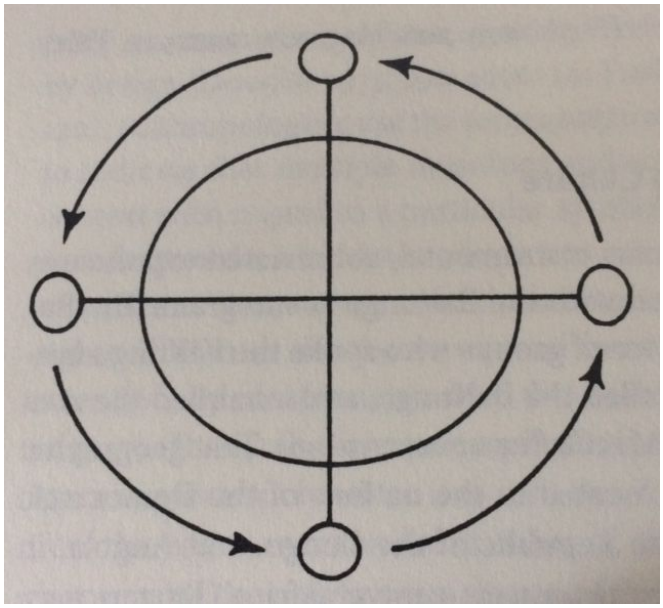


Figure 2.2 An example of the BaKongo Cosmogram, also called 'Dikenga dia Kongo.' (Symbol drawn by Christopher C. Fennell, in 'Crossroads and Cosmologies,' page 32.)

These stages of the BaKongo cosmogram also have different material and symbological associations with them: East and coming into the world - such as medicine or other healing/childbirth protections; North and power in the community - as well as maleness and similar traits - like wealth or the solidity of the community itself; West and the passage into spirit world - including the water journey to the spirit world - and/or protection from the spirits or some way of asking them for assistance; South and power in the spirit world - as well as femaleness and similar traits - usually having to do with the BaKongo beliefs of the spirit world, either objects related to water or white in color such as ash or white powder.

In the New World, as well as in hypotheses about the traditional use of the Cosmogram in southern West Africa, it is suggested that the Crossroads Symbol is a shorthand version of the BaKongo Cosmogram (Fennell 2003, 2010a). In simple cases, such as requiring a person to tell

the truth, one would not always be required to draw out the sometimes complex BaKongo cosmogram; one could simply draw two intersecting lines and the context and understanding of the symbol would be the same.

Within West African cultures, artifacts that the BaKongo Cosmogram/Crossroads Symbol on them, or rituals that utilized this symbol, were considered to hold immense power. The BaKongo religion had a spiritual 'supreme god' named Nzambi Mpungu, and the crossed lines of a Cosmogram represented sacred writing connected to this supreme god, and not to be undertaken lightly (Fennell 2003, Laman 1962). "Nzambi created a variety of intermediary spirits, known as *basimbi* (also spelled *bisimbi* for the plural and *simbi* in the singular) to whom the living may make supplication for aid in subsistence and for protection from disease, misfortune, and the attacks of adversaries..." (Fennell 2003:13) It was for the supplication of these *basimbi* that objects called *minkisi* (singular *nkisi*) were created; these *minkisi* were "physical containers, such as bowls, gourds, or cloth bags, into which a manifestation of one of those spirits could be summoned and focused..." (Fennell 2003:13)

Ritual objects utilizing *minkisi* often had crossed lines, and these lines were sometimes used in the decoration of the *nkisi* itself (Fennell 2003, Laman 1962). The drawing of these lines - typically done by spiritual *banganga* (singular *nganga,*) a kind of 'ritual specialist' - was also associated with more public practices, such as political treaties and oath taking (Laman 1957). Sometimes this specialist would draw the lines to try and protect the village from evil or disease (Laman 1962). These crossed lines could also be used in more private healing-type rituals, and when a person wanted to communicate with the spirit world or *basimbi* for help: "The nganga would typically draw crossed lines upon the ground, oriented along the cardinal directions, to

demarcate the ritual space in which this supplication would be made..." (Fennell 2003:15-16) According to Fennell, "The intersection of these lines represented the desired intersection and communication between the spirit world and the land of the living..." (2003:16)

Possible Crossroads at Various Plantations

Within the past few decades, excavations into three plantation sites in the southern United States have revealed possibly intentional deposits of artifacts placed beneath important buildings within the enslaved community in the shape of, and with artifacts representative of, the Crossroads Symbol. Excavations into the possibility of these so-called 'Crossroads Deposits' have been mainly carried out by Dr. Kenneth L. Brown at the University of Houston. These deposits are currently interpreted by Brown as being significant to the communities as statements of cultural beliefs and showing the interaction of different West African cultures (2015, 2018). Deposits have been found at the Frogmore Plantation on St. Helena Island, South Carolina; the Richmond Hill Plantation in Bryan Country, Georgia; and the Levi Jordan Plantation in Brazoria County, Texas. Additionally, possible 'Crossroads Deposits' have been discovered beneath two cabins at the Magnolia Plantation in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, however, we will focus on the 'confirmed' deposits first.

Frogmore Plantation

Brown found one of the Frogmore deposits underneath the building that most likely functioned as the curer's cabin in the quarters. Four complete deposits lay beneath the curer's cabin at Frogmore: the eastern deposit appears to be a conjure bottle - "a complete green glass

bottle that appeared to have a large blue glass bead that served as a 'stopper,' a green glass-bottle neck, and a thirteen-inch-long cast-iron 'needle...'" (Brown 2015:173). Hypotheses on how conjure bottles worked are based on what is sometimes recovered from inside them. At Frogmore, magnetic sand was found in the intact bottle; it is believed that the needle and the magnetic sand would interact in some way that would have been relevant to the curer. It is likely that the curer and any apprentices they trained would be familiar with the cultural interpretation of the conjure bottle, also adding more practical 'medical' treatments to the 'culturally important' healing (Wilkie 1997).

Deposited in the northern section of this 'Crossroads Deposit' was a complete calf skeleton. "[The calf], positioned facing east... had been shot in the nose with a shotgun and staked to the base of a four-foot-deep pit," (Brown 2015:173). A possible objection to the importance of this deposit is that this fully articulated calf was merely a forgotten cache made by the enslaved: either to hurt the owner financially by stealing livestock or because they were short on food, some of the enslaved stole a calf, shot it, and buried it outside the curer's cabin, either forgetting to retrieve it later or unable to do so. This is highly unlikely, as the skeleton was completely intact with absolutely no cut marks, it had been staked to the ground, and killed in a very deliberate way. If one were trying to be quiet about killing an animal, a shotgun blast is not the most discreet method. In addition, a few other artifacts within the deposit looked to have been placed there deliberately and make no sense if the end goal was to retrieve the calf for butchering. "The base of a colonoware bowl was on the calf's side and a whelk shell stood between its two hind legs," (Brown 2015:173). The interpretation of the artifact use and

placement is currently unknown, but it does seem to indicate more than a random or hurried burial of the calf.

Figure 2.3 The fully articulated calf skeleton from the northern curer's cabin deposit at Frogmore, nicknamed 'Moo.'

The western deposit consisted of a complete chicken skeleton, wings outspread, also facing east like the calf; the southern deposit was a simple hole full of ash, burned sea shells, and nails (Brown 2015). The meanings of these deposits becomes more clear when one considers traditional African and African American interpretations of such deposits. In West African and African American communities, chickens are considered to hold some importance as a form of protection. In Dallas, Texas, a historical African American graveyard was going to be moved to allow for more construction, and during the deliberations a journalist found many chickens in various states of decay along one of the ditches bordering the cemetery. After inquiries about the birds were made in the African American community, it was discovered that some community members regarded the birds as protectors and were placing them there in order to halt moving of those buried thee or at least protect them as work was being done.

The artifacts in the southern deposit also make more sense when one considers the African beliefs about the southern arm of the BaKongo Cosmogram. The southern arm was symbolic of the height of power in the spirit world, and the height of one's power as a female. Associated with the journey into the spirit world was water: spirits were thought to cross a body of water in order to reach the spirit world (Fennell 2003). The spirit world itself had strong connections with the color white, and objects of that color or sometimes ash would be used ritually to represent the spirit world during BaKongo rituals to communicate with the dead. With this interpretation, the artifacts in the southern deposit of Frogmore are placed into a clearer context: burned seashells and ash would have been indicative of the southern arm of BaKongo Cosmogram or the Crossroads Symbol and would have been understood by all the enslaved community members familiar with that ideological concept.

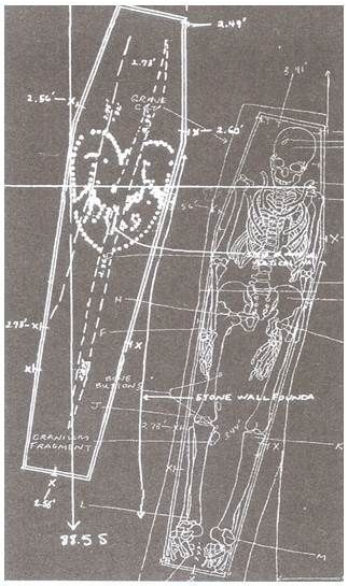
The meanings of the other two deposits at Frogmore also make sense when interpreted through the lens of the BaKongo Cosmogram/Crossroads Symbol. The conjure bottle is associated with the curer, and it is likely that the curer would also have served as a midwife to the enslaved community. This would mean that the curer - and artifacts associated with them - would be representative of birth into the physical world, which would correlate to an artifact associated with the curer being placed in this directional deposit beneath their cabin. The fully articulated calf in the northern deposit could be taken as a sign of wealth. Cows were a very rare commodity for the enslaved population and so to include a calf in the northern deposit, which represents one's height of power in the community, would be indicative of a demonstration of power through possession of a valuable object.

Richmond Hill Plantation

Moving further south from St. Helena Island and into Georgia, next we look at the Richmond Hill plantation. Brown excavated this site with the intent to find the historically-known praise house. This praise house was found and another 'Crossroads Deposit' was uncovered, the only one at Richmond Hill as a curer's cabin was not found in the quarters. Even though the building was not oriented in a north-south manner, the deposits were positioned at each of the cardinal directions beneath the building. The four deposits under the praise house at Richmond Hill are in the east, fragments of glass that had been laid flat in a hole; in the north, a hole that "had been dug in the rough shape of a cross," (Brown 2015:171) and contained multiple oyster shells; in the western deposit, a human skull - again facing east; in the southern deposit, "an apparent 'Sankofa' symbol made of white plaster and placed in the base of yet another hole," (Brown 2015:171).

These deposits somewhat follow the rough interpretation of the BaKongo Cosmogram/Crossroads symbol, with slight variations from that used at the Frogmore plantation. The eastern deposit is harder to place than the others, as the glass fragments do not seem to have any direct connection to birth into the physical world; it is possible that the glass being laid flat was meant to mimic the surface of water, which would have reflected light shined on it. Fennell brings up that the "Reflective surfaces of seashells, quartz crystals, and mica or mirror fragments were metaphoric for the water boundary of the living and the world of spirits, and thus communicated the invocation of spiritual forces into the world of the living," (2003:14). This would explain the glass fragments in the east, as it was where the spirits again crossed the boundary into the world of the living.

The other deposits are relatively easier to connect to portions of the crossroads. The northern deposit has some relevant connections to the northern arms of the Cosmogram or Crossroads: while there are freshwater mussels in the nearby Ogeechee River, the nearest oysters would be located on the coast, at least an 8-hour walk from the plantation. So having a large amount of oysters could indicate power in the community by possessing items that were difficult to acquire. In addition, the enslaved deposited the oyster shells into a cross-shaped hole, which could be a connection to the power of the praise house and related ideology within the community. Examination of the human skull recovered from the western deposit revealed that it appeared to be Native American in origin; a suggestion on how the enslaved acquired this skull is that it was found nearby, having been uncovered by natural erosion processes, and was utilized in the underground deposit to symbolize the transition into the spirit world, physical death (Brown, personal communication 2018). The southern deposit, with its supposed 'Sankofa' symbol in white plaster, also fits well into the Crossroads schematic: the Sankofa symbol was used in Ghana, and has been documented in modern African American culture to mean 'reflection on the past.' It has been found on a few artifacts associated with enslaved African Americans, as well as a nail-driven pattern into a wooden coffin of an African American woman in the African Burial Ground in Manhattan.



Figures 2.4 and 2.5 Left: A drawing of a Sankofa symbol. Traditionally, accepted meanings include 'Go back and get it,' or 'It's not wrong to go back for that which you've forgotten.' (Brown, personal communication, 2019) Right: A diagram of the decorated coffin lid found at the African Burial Ground, showing nails driven into the lid in what appears to be a Sankofa symbol.

Figures 2.6 and 2.7 A decorated spoon recovered from the Levi Jordan plantation, bearing what appears to be a Sankofa symbol on the handle. The design would be small enough to go unnoticed by someone unfamiliar with the meaning.

One of the more interesting connections Richmond Hill has to the 'Crossroads Deposits' and the creation of praise houses in general, is that an owner of the Richmond Hill plantation - Thomas S. Clay - published a pamphlet about spirituality for enslaved African Americans. He proposed keeping enslaved populations 'contented' by building praise houses where they could worship on the plantation. Clay mentions a variety of practices that will help to 'improve' the moral condition of the enslaved: not assigning work on Sundays so they can attend public preachings, preachers adapting part of their sermons to be relevant to the enslaved, forming temperance movements in the quarters, and offering ways to deal with the enslaved who steal from the owners (1883). He also mentions having separate Sunday schools specifically for the enslaved as well as regular meetings for the adults and schools for the children to aid in their moral education - although with specific instructions to "spare them the embarrassment of calling too many faculties of the mind into exercise at once," (Clay 1833:5). Also included are how the quarters are to be constructed to allow for 'breathing room,' how summer and winter clothes are to be handed out, how to care for the sick, how not to overwork the enslaved, and how to deal with arguments between members of the enslaved population when they arise (Clay 1833). Overall, this pamphlet provides a detailed checklist, and was distributed throughout parts of Georgia, with many plantation owners taking Clay's advice (Brown 2015).

One of the most important things related to this thesis that is found in Clay's pamphlet has to do with the buildings where the enslaved are supposed to be 'educated' and worship. Clay gives detailed instructions for how these buildings are to be structured and how the activities should be conducted:

> ...[the enslaved should] occupy benches, which are capable of accommodating eight or ten persons, and these benches arranged one behind another, that in front should be filled by a different set every evening, each set in its turn; and the same individuals should always sit together, each bench being provided with a monitor, whose duty it should be to report the absent; and excuses for absence should be required the following evening after meeting. (Clay 1833:7)

In all of this detail about structure of these practices, nowhere does Clay mention that there should be deposits placed beneath the buildings, oriented in cardinal directions, with objects chosen by the enslaved. And yet, deposits such as these are found beneath the praise houses of at least two plantations - including one smaller, possibly private worship space at Magnolia - across the southern United States.

Levi Jordan Plantation

Moving even further west to Texas, the Levi Jordan plantation contains 'Crossroads Deposits' beneath two buildings: a church/praise house and the curer's cabin. The 'praise house' was actually one of the cabins in the quarters that was modified to stand in for a separately built praise house. At some point during enslavement, the hearth in one of the rooms was removed, and an additional wall was added to create a smaller room, suspected to be the home of the pastor, Clayborn Holmes. The deposits here, like the ones at Richmond Hill, correspond to the cardinal directions even though the cabin itself is not built along those lines.

Beginning in the east, the deposits are: “a ‘hunting knife’ placed into a hole buried beneath four bricks arranged in a cross,” (Brown 2015:171), the northern deposit held a few coins, beads, a crystal from a chandelier, and some other smaller household and ash/charcoal artifacts; the western deposit contained “the only mortared cluster of bricks discovered during the excavation of the Jordan quarters,” (Brown 2015:171) as well as some metal artifacts such as knives, large spikes, and some small farming tools; the southern deposit consisted of more ash and burned shells and nails placed in a simple hole (Brown 2015). Before going on to the curer’s cabin deposits, these deposits and their possible connection to the BaKongo Cosmogram/Crossroads Symbol will be discussed.

As with the Richmond Hill plantation, the eastern deposit is somewhat hard to interpret. However, the placement of bricks into a cross-shape buried beneath the place used for community worship could indicate a modified interpretation of the Crossroads Symbol: instead of using the direction East as meaning ‘birth into the community,’ it could instead mean ‘birth into the physical world.’ When one remembers that in the Gullah culture, the practice of ‘catching sense’ involves an initiation into the praise house before one becomes a member of the larger community, this deposit makes sense. The possibility of having similar cultural and ideological ideas like this over a larger distance than previously thought deserves more study, to be sure, before this assertion can be definitively proved, but it does support this hypothesis.

The remaining deposits fall into the same pattern: coins in the northern deposit being linked to material wealth in the community/physical world, and ash and burned shells in the southern deposit being linked to the spirit world. The western deposit is more interesting: the artifacts do not follow a direct symbolization of death or a transition to the spirit world; it has a

set of plastered bricks and large quantities of metal. The plastered bricks are interesting, as they are the only construction of that kind on the plantation; the slave quarters were built with bricks, but were made without mortar holding the bricks together, leaving the walls 'floating' and making the buildings relatively unstable but also much cheaper to build (Brown 2018). Having plaster to hold these bricks together, especially when there is no real structural need for them to hold together, could indicate some kind of mentality to encourage 'strength' or something in a similar vein. The deposits of metal are also interesting, as they bear a striking resemblance in ideological function to the western deposit beneath the curer's cabin on the same plantation.

In addition, the praise house at Jordan also contained a larger set of 'Crossroads Deposits' that encompassed the other set and shared the western deposit. A plaster form in the shape of a cross was in the east, an altar with white and red colors in the north, and more ash in the southern deposit. It is suggested that this larger set of 'Crossroads' was meant to symbolize initiation into and protection for the praise house community itself, rather than a more general, community interpretation of the Crossroads symbol (Brown, personal communication 2018). Interestingly, "the southern deposit actually extends from the sanctuary of the church, across... the hearth built within the minister's house, and into the footprint of the elder's cabin," (Brown 2015:176). The elder was believed to be a spiritual guider in addition to the minister and would have an important role in the community of the quarters (Brown 2018).

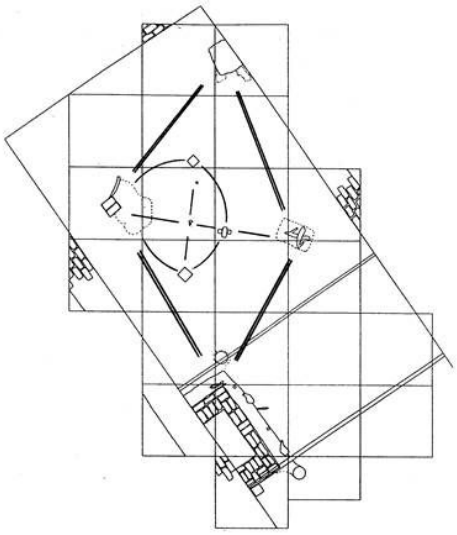


Figure 2.8 A map of the two sets of deposits found at the Levi Jordan praise house. Both sets share the Western deposit. Interestingly, the deposits are lined up with the cardinal directions, even though the building is not.

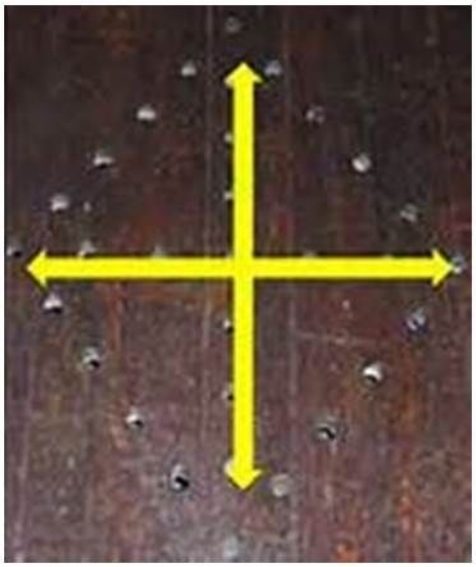


Figure 2.9 A picture of holes drilled into the floor at the First African Baptist Church in Savannah, Georgia. The shape of this is reminiscent of a Crossroads Symbol, and shares similarities with the shape of the deposits found at the Jordan plantation.

The curer's cabin deposits at Jordan were the first 'Crossroads Deposits' found on any of the plantations previously discussed. The first portion of the deposit - the eastern deposit - was excavated before the other deposits were found. It consisted of "three cast-iron vessel bases, caulk fragments, a thermometer, patent medicine bottles, spikes, nails, knife blades, bird skulls, and other items..." (Brown 2015:172). This assortment of artifacts is conjectured by Brown to be the curer's kit: items used by the curer in order to facilitate healing and symbolic of the curer themselves. The inclusion of the cast-iron bases - thought to be from cast-iron pots or kettles - has ties back to West African ideological beliefs, as ideological rituals utilizing the BaKongo Cosmogram would often include drawing out the Cosmogram on a kettle base (Fennell 2003).

The northern curer's deposit at Jordan consisted of some coins contained in a cloth bag, again possibly taken as power in the community; the southern deposit had more ash, burned shell, and burned nails; and the western deposit - important here for its similarity to the western deposit of the praise house 'Crossroads' - was "two cast-iron kettles that had been placed one inside the other, wrapped in chains, and covered with the broken sides of another kettle...[as well as] metal plow blades, axes, knife blades, additional chains and vessel fragments, green glass, and a complete bayonet..." (Brown 2015:172). The two whole kettles and chains had been deposited in the main hole dug for the western deposit, while the other artifacts were scattered nearby (Brown 2015).

Both of the western 'Crossroads Deposits' at Jordan have metal artifacts within them. This puzzled the excavators, and did so until the findings were discussed at an archaeological conference, showing pictures of the various deposits recovered. One of the attendees who had knowledge of African and African American cultural customs later came up to Brown and

informed him that the kettles-and-chain deposit bore a striking resemblance to an *amula*, a type of protection charm used by the Yoruba of West Africa (Brown, personal communication 2018). The purpose of an *amula* was to capture negative spirits and keep them from entering the place of where the *amula* was placed. With this mindset, having these deposits on the western side of the 'Crossroads,' could be taken as a modified interpretation of the original meaning: the western arm of the Cosmogram is the place where the physical world meets the spirit world, and so the boundary between the two is closer here than it is elsewhere in the Cosmogram. With the spirit world being so close in that area, it could be said that a desire to keep out negative or unwanted spirits would prompt someone to place a protective charm or object in this area - such as the *amula* at Jordan or the fully articulated chickens at Frogmore and the African American cemetery in Dallas.

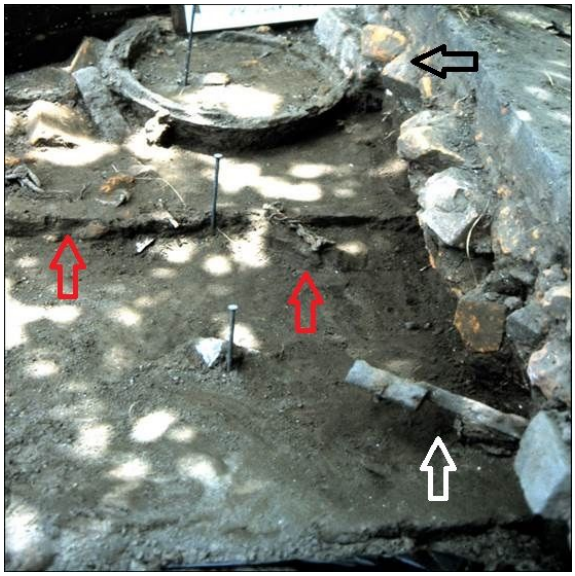


Figure 2.10 A photograph of the amula-like deposit* in situ *at the Levi Jordan plantation. The two kettles (black), parts of the chains (red), and a bayonet (white) are visible.

This interpretation is interesting as it exposes the possibility of multiple West African cultures interacting to form a new culture. Robert Farris Thompson in Fennell's book *Crossroads and Cosmologies* noted that the artifacts found at the Jordan plantation "suggest intra-African fusions of patterns of belief; that is, the iron emblems of the Yoruba god of iron placed within the ruling obsession of the Kongo dikenga," (2010a:xviii). Regardless of the widespread meaning of 'Crossroads Deposits' at various plantations, a Yoruban *amula*-like artifact found in a depositional structure with possible links to the BaKongo region at the Levi Jordan plantation is very significant. It shows that people from various cultural regions were placed into enslavement at the Jordan plantation, and that they made attempts to merge two ideological patterns to form a cohesive whole that members from both cultures would understand and feel attached to. This attempt at creating a better-understood culture from the bondage of enslavement shows the very real possibility that Africans and African Americans did not completely submit to the culture of European Americans and instead worked on creating their own functional culture that had slight variations from quarters to quarters, yet would be understood by everyone at a particular plantation, in order to cope with and resist enslavement (Brown 2018).

The presence of multiple sets of possible 'Crossroads Deposits' beneath structures like praise houses and curer's cabins across multiple plantations seems to indicate that some kind of cultural convention existed for sub-floor deposits in these culturally important community areas. That there would be similar deposits in a similar pattern in plantation quarters across the southern United States is interesting and bears promise for future excavations done into plantation quarters to see if this is a widespread phenomenon. The inclusion of these similar deposits on a plantation as far inland from the southeastern United States coast as Texas - and

Louisiana for the Magnolia Plantation - seems to indicate the possibility that the importance of symbolic 'Crossroads deposits' are not limited to just the Gullah and southeastern United States enslaved populations.

An argument against the interpretation of these deposits as being African retentions is the assertion that they, or any instance of an equilateral cross on clothing, pottery, or anything else, are merely an example of the enslaved population adopting Christianity and abandoning their original African beliefs. Supporters of this argument say that an equilateral cross is just how the enslaved wrote out a typical Christian cross, as the enslaved adopted many Christian traditions during enslavement: water baptism, meeting in churches or praise houses for worship, learning - modified - Christian teachings, and some Christian practices. Some supporters even criticise the constant attempts to make an equilateral cross in plantation quarters mean a Crossroads symbol.

Carl Steen takes an opposing stance to that proposed by Leland Ferguson regarding the placement of cross-like marks on colonoware pottery. Ferguson found multiple bowls from South Carolina, most of them submerged in a river, with some bearing symbols that look like an equilateral cross, a dot with four lines radiating from it, and other hatch-marks (Ferguson 1992, 1999). Ferguson uses colonoware pottery to prove his point. There has been a debate in archaeology for a long time about the producers of this pottery: British archaeologist Ivor Noël Hume, who discovered this form of pottery, proposed that it was made by Native Americans who sold it to the European American settlers and the enslaved African Americans (Fennell 2010b). Ferguson, on the other hand, asserts in his work that colonoware was likely made by a combination of both Native Americans and African Americans (1992, 1999). He goes on to say that the marks on these bowls link back to the BaKongo Cosmogram.

Steen argues that very little evidence indicates that enslaved African Americans on plantations "ever made pottery at all," (Steen 2011:166). Steen lists a number of ecological processes that would cause the same results that other archaeologists use to prove that colonoware pieces were manufactured by the enslaved (2011). In addition, he points out that the idea of African Americans being the only 'enslaved' population in the lowcountry - consisting mainly of Georgia, Florida, and the Carolinas - is inaccurate: "...Indian slaves made up about 20% of the population in 1708, and in fact, as much as 25% of the slave population was Native American as late as the mid 1720s," (Steen 2011:167). Overall, Steen is unconvinced that that Xs found on colonoware pottery is related to the BaKongo Cosmogram, citing the fact that there were Christian Native Americans residing on some of these plantation - who would have had reason to utilize a 'Christian' cross rather than other symbols - and that some variety was found in the specific religions practiced by the enslaved, owing to their wide geographical and cultural range (2011). Steen goes on to say that his interpretation is that the Xs/crosses were used to invoke whichever god the person believed in, and that "...in North America there are no accounts, or even unambiguous suggestions that these Xs or +s, were meant to represent a little-understood African religion practiced 250 years ago," (Steen 2011:168). A final argument Steen makes is that the desire to prove that markings made on artifacts have 'secret' African meanings can be damaging to the study of archaeology (2011). Merely assuming that every mark, symbol, or practice made or practiced by enslaved populations should be lumped into a single category of meaning is quite presumptuous, and disregards the great variety of cultures found in Africa, and possible cultural evolutions made in the New World.

However, Steen's argument has a few problems. The first is simple, and that is the the shape of the symbol. The most well-known Christian cross has unequal arms: a longer vertical line intersected by a shorter horizontal line about one-third of the way down from the top. Meanwhile, the equilateral crosses found in the quarters are as the name says: equilateral. While there is a great deal of variety in Christian crosses, this longer vertical/shorter horizontal shape is the most common. The assumption that the enslaved were not aware of the difference between an equilateral cross and an unequal Christian cross, and merely drew an equilateral cross because it was easier, disparages their intelligence. Clearly a visible difference can be seen between the two, and if the enslaved had wanted to utilize an unequal Christian cross they surely would have. A second issue with this argument is that it was documented by early European missionaries that in areas of Africa, African tribes adapted some of the aspects of Christian teachings and merely molded it to be coherent with their own ideological beliefs.

From the New World, two Christian-origin artifacts found at the Magnolia Plantation have been modified from their original meaning. These artifacts are two Miraculous Medals commissioned by the Catholic Church in 1832 to represent the Virgin Mary. The medals found on that plantation have been modified from their original design: one has had holes drilled at four points along the edge that form a cross when lines are drawn between them, and the other had been extensively reworked to change the appearance of the Virgin Mary: altering the structures around her and the figure itself to reflect a more 'African' look (Brown 2015).

Figure 2.11 The Miraculous Medal with four cutouts, discovered in Cabin 4. The cutouts have been added to the medal after the original casting.

Figures 2.12 and 2.13 Left: The heavily-modified gold Miraculous Medal from Cabin 1. Modifications from the original design include changing the halo into more of a head wrap, changing the face to reflect seemingly more African features, removal of the Earth below the feet (keeping the snakes,) and considerably lowering the neckline of the dress and accentuating the breasts of the figure (Brown 2018). Right: A very similar design to the golden Miraculous Medal found at Magnolia, cast in the 1800s, showing the original components: the Virgin Mary with a halo, high-necked robes, holding snakes with a snake at her feet, and standing on the world. (Photograph courtesy of Amber Green from LuxMeaChristus.)

Finally, there is the issue of visibility. The utilization of an equilateral cross, sub-floor 'Crossroads Deposits,' and even modified Catholic Miraculous Medals would all have worked to confuse European American owners and overseers. Even the extensively reworked Miraculous Medal was small enough that "while... being worn [the] modification might well have gone unnoticed by a casual observer, resulting in an incorrect interpretation of meaning as defined by the medals' association with the Catholic Church," (Brown 2015:183). The sub-floor, non-visible nature of the deposits, as well as the subtle adjustments to the medals meant that someone would have to be taught that the modifications and deposits were there, as well the intended meanings. This is consistent with the concept of 'catching sense' in one's own plantation community: if the deposits were different across different plantations, being 'culturally initiated' into your community's culture meant that you learned about your specific set of deposits, but also knew enough about the general meanings that similar deposits would be understandable.

This means that the intended meaning for the enslaved population or individual would have been well-understood within the quarters, but surface-level investigation by the owner and overseer would assure them that the enslaved were merely adapting to European American culture. Even the equilateral crosses could have been interpreted to be mis-drawn representations of the Christian cross - as some interpret them now - and so would have also indicated to the European Americans that their culture was being completely adopted. In addition, having the sub-floor deposits beneath the curer's cabin and praise house was a way for the enslaved to have tremendous input into their cultural and ideological structure - regardless of connection to the BaKongo Cosmogram or not - and would have gone completely unnoticed by European Americans as the deposits were subterranean.

This argument about the 'Christian' meanings of these deposits/symbols arise because of the relatively small number of these 'Crossroads Deposits' that have been excavated, and, relatedly, the little attention that has been paid to African American archaeology for the past century. When compared to archaeology of the rest of North America, or even the southern United States, the archaeology of enslaved populations held little academic interest until the 1960s. This lack of interest was later documented by Leland Ferguson: "Prodded by the Civil Rights Movement, archaeologists in the late 1960s began excavating the buried artifacts of colonial African Americans," (Ferguson 1992:xxxv). Ferguson went on to say that in most cases during that early period, an archaeologist who chose to excavate sites of African American importance

> ...was not bowing to professional pressure or pleas for a new and more objective archaeology; he was addressing black demands for more attentiveness to black history, and without that political pressure African American archaeology would have developed much more slowly, if at all. (1992:xxxviii)

Because of this relative lack of interest or study until at least the 1960s, this means that the archaeology of African American history is woefully understudied when compared to the archaeology of colonial, antebellum, or industrial-era European Americans. Therefore, at this point in time, if there were to be any suggestion of a widespread cultural pattern followed by members of an enslaved population, the lack of in-depth examination into the quarters on any plantation means that it can be difficult to prove one way or the other. The assertion that the

currently known ‘Crossroads Deposits’ are definitively linked to the meanings of the BaKongo Cosmogram is difficult to prove due to this lack of in-depth examination across multiple sets of quarters. However by this same token it is detrimental to the further study of African American archaeology to say that all enslaved Africans and African Americans merely acculturated into European American culture and did not have any initiative to form their own cultural practices or beliefs. This latter idea was accepted during the early period of African American archaeology, as Ferguson notes,

> during the early twentieth century many scholars subscribed to the theory that slaves had completely lost their African culture. Eager to sever the connection between ‘acculturated’ African Americans and the perceived ‘barbarism’ of Africa, this view was supported by progressive scholars and Christian missionaries who overlooked or even suppressed African traits. (1992:75)

History and Crossroads Deposits at Magnolia

The Magnolia Plantation is currently a part of the Cane River Creole National Historical Park maintained by the National Park Service and open to the public as an interactive park. The plantation has a long history, some of which will be laid out here to provide a brief overview of the context of the plantation, quarters, and inhabitants. The NPS ordered excavations in the quarters at the request of the NPS in order to add to the interactive tour portion at the park to provide insight into the lives of the past inhabitants of the quarters; this was done in part because

interviews with previous tenant farmers and inhabitants revealed they desired the park to display as accurate a picture of the plantation's history as possible (Crespi 2004).

The Magnolia Plantation is one of the most intact pre-Civil War plantations in that region and was designated as a United States National Heritage Area - with one of the most relevant features being the completeness of the quarters (Brown 2018). Many quarters from plantations have been destroyed over time, either to salvage the materials used to build the quarters or through simple erosion processes. The Magnolia Plantation had multiple owners throughout the years, before finally coming under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service while still owned by members of the Hertzog family. It began with Jean Baptiste Lecomte I who gained control of the land in 1763 after serving in the French outpost of Natchitoches. The original crop grown on the plantation was tobacco, producing high quantities of the crop even after the Spanish took control of the region (Brown 2018). In these first stages of the plantation, the number of enslaved remained low, beginning with three and then expanding to five a few years later.

Eventually one of Jean Baptiste's sons, Ambroise Lecomte I, married into another prominent family with decent amounts of land - the Cloutiers. During the 1780s, the Spanish asked for evidence of ownership from plantation families living along the Cane River, and Jean Baptiste's wife - now the 'Widow Lecomte' - provided evidence of ownership and gained additional tracts of land along the river, which she entrusted to Ambroise I in 1787, though still with a relatively small number of enslaved people. By 1795, Ambroise I had fourteen enslaved people and gained even more land from the Spanish. Also in the 1790s, the production turned from tobacco to cotton.

After being ceded back to France in 1800, the territory was then sold to the United States in 1803, and once again proof of ownership had to be provided by the Lecomtes to the United States, as well as listing a census of the enslaved persons on the plantation. Eventually, the great-grandson of Jean Baptiste I, Ambroise II, came to acquire chunks of land and small groups of enslaved people - usually around five to eleven - during the 1820s. "In 1835, Ambroise II purchased approximately 960 acres of land from Gasparite Lacour for $29,000," (Brown 2018:29). This marked the 'official' start of the Magnolia Plantation as it is today. An inventory compiled in 1845 listed, among the other things on the plantation, five incomplete brick slave cabins are believed to be the first cabins built in what would become the plantation quarters. Throughout the next twenty years, the enslaved population at Magnolia and Ambroise II's other plantation - Shallow Lake - swelled to 235 people.

Eventually, Ambroise II married again and moved away from the plantation and into the town of Natchitoches a few years after his previous wife died. This left Suzette Hertzog Buard, the widow of Louis Buard, her children, and her brother at Magnolia. In 1852, Ambroise II's daughter Atala married Suzette's brother Mathieu, and Ambroise 'retired' to focus on breeding race-horses. He also granted Atala "a 40% interest in Magnolia," (Brown 2018:34) and the couple moved into residence, cementing the Hertzog name into the foundation of Magnolia.

In April 1864, Federal troops went to the plantation and burned the main house, while the Lecomtes and Hertzogs had retreated into the city. Atala and Mathieu, upon returning, began to rebuild parts of the plantation, "A process that required their negotiating new forms of labor contracts with the plantation's newly emancipated labor force," (Brown 2018:37). By the 1870s, the family had shifted over to sharecropping, wage labor, and tenancy in order to maintain their

control over their large amounts of land (Brown 2018). In addition, the Hertzogs hired additional day laborers to perform other duties on the plantation.

Control eventually passed to Mathieu's grandson, Mathew Hertzog II. "While various overseers may have directed the work required to carry out his decisions concerning the Quarters and the farms, Mr. Hertzog was considered the ultimate authority by the plantation's residents and laborers," (Brown 2018:39). It was Mr. Hertzog's decision that the original two-room cabins in the quarters be converted so that one family could inhabit both rooms. After both Mr. Hertzog and his wife Lydia died, control passed to their only child Ms. Elizabeth Hertzog in 1988. Because parts of the plantation were still producing crops, but the older buildings including the quarters were becoming more costly to keep up than could be easily managed, Ms.Hertzog and others donated the land with the buildings to Museum Contents, Inc. of Natchitoches, and it was later denoted as a Historic Place (Brown 2018).

The Magnolia Quarters

The entirety of the Magnolia quarters consisted of four rows of six brick cabins, but only two rows are on the property now maintained by the National Parks Service. Of these 'owned' cabins, 5 of the cabins are still standing completely, 1 is just half of a cabin, and the other 18 of these cabins have fallen into ruins. The NPS refurbished one of the standing cabins, Cabin 1, with wooden floors - like those used in the cabins post-1940s - in order to open one of the cabins to the public to illustrate what the daily lives of the enslaved and later tenant families were like. The modified cabin is thought to be the curer's cabin, so it would have been important in the enslaved community.

Figure 2.14 An exterior picture of Cabin 3, showing the doors to both rooms and the added window on the southern room.

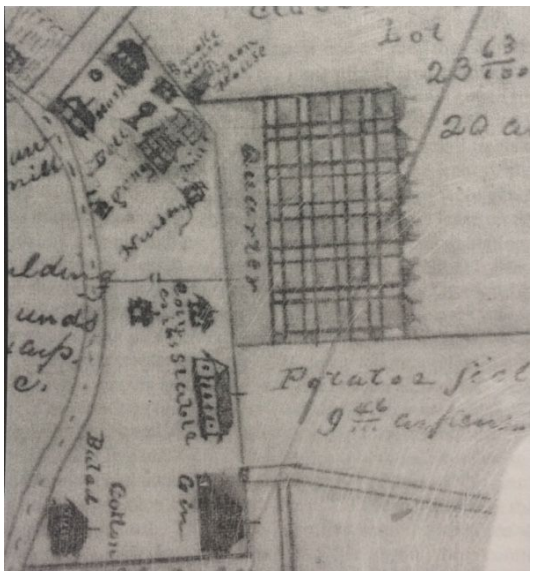


Figure 2.15 A map of the Magnolia Plantation in 1858 as drawn by G.S. Walmsley. The large grid-like section is the location of the original 24 cabins in the quarters (Photograph by K.L. Brown, original map is in the possession of Ms. Betty Hertzog, taken from Brown 2018)

An important aspect of the quarters community at Magnolia was the expansion into the cabins post-Emancipation. Each cabin in the quarters was divided into two rooms, with a party wall connecting them and one family residing in each room, for a total of two families per cabin. In the early 1900s, some of the families moved into tenant housing to continue working on the plantation as tenant farmers or sharecroppers. Other families chose to remain in the quarters and expanded their occupancy to both rooms in each cabin: the party wall was cut to create a doorway between the two rooms.

One of the cabins being looked at for this study, Cabin 3, also had some additional modifications after its initial construction (Brown 2018, Cole 2013). Oral interviews with previous residents of the quarters revealed that Cabin 3 might have been the place where someone could go to "get a piece of cake and a glass of whisky," (Brown, personal communication 2018). During excavations, Brown determined:

> ...a behavioral pattern that was practiced within the community throughout that time [1940s onwards], and an interesting bit of oral testimony, we hypothesize that some type(s) of commodities were being manufactured and sold out of the southern room of Cabin #3, possibly baked goods and a homemade 'adult beverage.' (2018:139)

This assertion is somewhat supported by the physical changes to Cabin 3: the addition of a window in the southern room that is not present in any of the other cabins (Brown 2018, Cole 2013), and a later room/porch added onto the southern room that was concealed by a 'privacy fence;' this fence was moved from concealing the added-on southern window to concealing the

plank addition (Cole 2013). As none of the other cabin residences show signs of additional windows or 'privacy' fences, there is likely some specific reason these things were put into place for Cabin 3.

Because of these modifications, a limitation of this study is that these data will not reflect direct comparison of two identical-use cabins. Cabin 4 served primarily as a residential cabin, while Cabin 3 had a residence and additional commercial activity with the sale of 'cake and whisky.' Because of the difference in 'use' of the two cabins, it could be difficult to establish a consistent pattern using only Cabins 3 and 4. If Cabin 1 had not been archaeologically impacted, it could have served to show a difference - if one exists - between the cabins used for residences (Cabins 1 and 4,) and the one used for commerce activity (Cabin 3).

Regarding 'Crossroads Deposits' at the Magnolia Plantation, two sets of deposits, one underneath the curer's cabin and one beneath a residential cabin, might have connections to the religious structure of the community. The building suspected to function as the church/praise house was located outside the property line of the Cane River Creole National Historical Park, and so the excavation team "[was] unable to excavate the postemancipation African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church on Magnolia Plantation..." (Brown 2015:171). However, the two 'Crossroads Deposits' that were found bear close similarities to the deposits found on the previous three plantations.

The first set of deposits is underneath the curer's cabin. Some controversy surrounds this cabin, Cabin 1, as it was modified for display to the public. Throughout a history of occupation, "The NPS archaeologists incorrectly determined that the cabin had had wooden floors, and the park staff, therefore, removed approximately six inches of the original dirt floor without

archaeological supervision," (Brown 2015:174). Because of this, one or two of the deposits making up the 'Crossroads Deposit' was affected, and the movement of the original floors and reconstruction of the hearth "made the identification of a potential northern deposit impossible," (Brown 2015:171). The deposits that were found beneath Cabin 1 were the eastern, western, and the partially-destroyed southern deposit.

The eastern deposit contained a modified locket, that "had four curved 'arrows' engraved on one of its surfaces," (Brown 2015:174). In addition, archaeologists discovered a shell in the same deposit. Interestingly, they found another shell, this one modified, in the southern room of Cabin 3 just in front of the hearth. This shell had four holes drilled into it first with a small drill and then "finished with a small file or some other type of implement that was employed to carve six 'corners' into each of the holes," (Brown 2018:132). Brown suggests that these four holes bear a connection to the Crossroads Symbol, and the six points could be a reference to a six-pointed star, a much-used symbol also found in West African cultures (2018).

The partially-destroyed southern deposit in Cabin 1 was only intact for the deepest inch below the original floor of the cabin, as NPS personnel removed the upper levels prior to Brown's excavation. This deposit contained "the remains of a blue glass bottle, a couple of blue glass beads, and two human deciduous teeth," (Brown 2015:174). The western deposit beneath Cabin 1 was untouched by the NPS, but it was determined that prior to the excavations carried out by Brown, an excavation had removed some of the artifacts from the deposit (Brown 2015). "However, at the base of the original feature, [there was] recovered four cast-iron rods approximately seven to nine inches in length and nearly 1.5 inches thick," (Brown 2015:174).

The rods had been deposited in such a way as to mark out a diamond shape, possibly containing whatever artifacts had been removed by the prior excavation.

Figure 2.16 Aunt Agnes, the healer at Magnolia, who was claimed to have lived to over 100 years old. She is pictured here outside Cabin 1, with a clearly visible diamond-shaped object hanging on the wall behind her. (Photograph adapted from the Cammie Henry Collection, scrapbook 070, page 119, Northwestern State University.)

While there was no praise house deposit found at Magnolia, a set of deposits was uncovered beneath one of the residential cabins that could be said to function as a religious set of deposits. The eastern deposit here was a nearly completely intact chicken egg and a quartzite crystal; the western deposit consisted of another hole, probably originally covered with white plaster; the southern deposit is of great interest, as it utilizes some artifacts that are traditionally interpreted as Christian, but incorporates them into the 'Crossroads Deposit' scheme. The southern deposit contains another lining of white plaster around the entirety of the base of the

hole, as well as a bit of chicken eggshell, a rosary box, and a crucifix placed underneath the rosary box, with the figure of Christ facedown into the ground and with its head pointed towards the south (Brown 2015). This particular placement of the crucifix could be a callback to West African practices: Jerome Handler discusses in an article on Barbadian burial practices among the enslaved; in West African cultures people typically buried shamans face-down so their spirits could not escape (1996). An interpretation of Christ on the crucifix as a shaman would seem to support this practice.

The northern deposit for this 'Crossroads Deposit' was missing from the archaeological record, though Brown has speculated that the northern 'deposit' was an above-ground altar:

> Such altars were well-known household features among the Creole people population around the site area in Louisiana today. The family who occupied this cabin from sometime prior to or during the first quarter of the twentieth century through the 1960s were Catholic Creoles (Thomas Vercher, personal communication 2006). (Brown 2015:172)

This is corroborated by Muriel Crespi's report of the population of the quarters post-Emancipation, that, "At Magnolia, the quarters were exclusively black, except for one intermarried couple," (Crespi 2004:21). Crespi later identifies this intermarried couple, who inhabited the residential cabin with the deposit containing the rosary box and crucifix, as being Creole (2004).

The idea of a 'Crossroads Deposit' - especially one utilized by a single family and possibly not by the community at large - that combined both underground and above-ground components is very interesting. Also a set of deposits that utilized traditionally Christian-associated artifacts in a suspected African-influenced pattern is highly suggestive of at least some African retentions into African American culture, particularly if this set of deposits was placed later in the history of the quarters. In addition, the modified Miraculous Medals were found at Magnolia and indicate a more general pattern of appropriating Christian objects and modifying them for more general, African-influenced use.

The differences in the types of artifacts used here and the types of artifacts used on other plantations for these 'Crossroads Deposits,' as mentioned before, could indicate subtle differences in thinking from plantation to plantation. According to Brown:

> In curer's... cabins at these plantations, east appears to have been related to life/birth/health: at two sites (Jordan and Frogmore), major portions of the curers' ritual paraphernalia were recovered in the eastern crossroads deposits, while at the third site (Magnolia), ocean snail shell and a locket with a secondary carving possibly symbolized taking control of one's life. (2015:174)

In the same way:

> The western deposits - a fully articulated chicken at Frogmore and a Yoruban *amula* at Jordan... - at two of the sites have been interpreted as defining protection for the living

> instead of a transition to the world of spirits and ancestors, as is apparent in the western crossroad deposits at praiss houses/churches. The exception to this is the western deposit beneath the Magnolia midwife's cabin. (Brown 2015:174-175)

Brown draws the conclusion that the western deposit at the midwife's cabin at Magnolia - containing the removed artifacts and the iron spikes laid into a diamond shape - are related to associated symbols, and "might indicate that the deposit functioned as protection and not for transition," (2015:175). African American archaeology will surely benefit from the further study of meanings of 'Crossroads Deposits' that have already been excavated and future excavations that could possibly reveal similar deposits at other quarters on plantations across the southern United States.

Why Magnolia?

With the numerous plantations in the central south, why choose the Magnolia Plantation to examine the possibility of a patterned change in room use? One of the reasons is that a number of the original cabins are still standing in the quarters, which is uncommon among antebellum plantations. In addition, the cabins were used both during enslavement and after Emancipation, and the use of the cabins changed during occupation from a single family per room to a single family per cabin. Given these circumstances, the cabins provide a keen look into how the enslaved and later tenant farmers utilized this space - allowing for comparison of the two to see if any change occurred between enslavement and the move to tenant farming.

Magnolia is also one of the only plantations in the central southern United States that has revealed unique deposits beneath important structures within the enslaved community. As of now, only four such sites are known to have these 'Crossroads Deposits,' and in all cases very few intact cabins in the quarters remain and consequently fewer excavations of them have been done. Magnolia also provides the unique switch from one room per family to two rooms in the expansion post-Emancipation: when a family expanded into both rooms, the possibility of using each room for a different function can be examined based on the archaeological excavations and the depth at which the artifacts were found.

What This Means

Guthrie has shown that the Gullah people have multiple similarities to, and indeed are most likely modern-day cultural patterns of, the enslaved populations from plantations in the Sea Islands and Carolina lowcountry. The Gullah have a vibrant culture with strong connections to West African traditions and cultural practices that formed when attempting to resist the acculturation of enslavement and to form their own kinship ties and community after being stripped away from their original culture. Compared to the enslaved populations on other plantations in the southern United States, the ancestors of the modern-day Gullah had far more leeway in their cultural expression; due to the absent owners and overseers, and the less-intense observation during the day, the enslaved on plantations in this region had a larger degree of 'freedom' and could practice their own culture openly.

Two plantations in the southeastern United States have been found to have so-called 'Crossroads Deposits' beneath important community structures in the quarters - on St. Helena

Island and in Georgia. These deposits utilize a structure very similar to the BaKongo Cosmogram, originating from West Africa's BaKongo region, a region from which a large amount of enslaved people were imported because they knew how to grow rice and had an increased immunity to malaria, which was rampant in that area of the United States. The artifacts found in these 'Crossroads Deposits' appear to reflect the stages of life that are represented by the BaKongo Cosmogram and were perhaps intentionally placed below the important buildings without the knowledge of the European American owners and overseers.

Brown also found similar deposits on two plantations located more to the west in Louisiana, and currently as far west as Brazoria County in Texas. The deposits on these plantations follow the same general pattern as those in the southeastern region: four deposits, oriented to the cardinal directions, lay beneath both the curer's cabins and buildings that were focused on worship - the praise house at Levi Jordan and a residentially religious home at Magnolia - and utilized artifacts that reflected the ideas present in the BaKongo Cosmogram, admittedly with some slightly modified interpretations. These variations in interpretations both at the centrally located and southeastern plantations could reflect the original cultural makeup of the enslaved communities at each plantation. The highly inaccurate slave-trade records make it difficult to trace the regions of origin for people sold into enslavement; therefore, the cultural makeup of any given United States plantation could be very different from any other plantation, leading to a difference in how the enslaved community at a given plantation structured and practiced their cultural and ideological ideas.

The presence of these deposits show that the idea of a Crossroads Symbol was at the very least known to the enslaved inhabitants of the Magnolia Plantation. The slight variance from the

strict meanings given by the Crossroads Symbol/BaKongo Cosmogram can also be seen as a result of interactions between people from a variety of cultures in West Africa. When such a large number of people from a very diverse swatch of cultures are uprooted, forced into a new environment, and co-mingle, it is highly unlikely that many of those people would have been socially/culturally high-ranking individuals with detailed working knowledge of the ideological practices of their culture. Not everyone brought over during the slave trade would have been a village healer, shaman, or political leader. However, the average age of Africans shipped during the slave trade was below 30, so there is a very good chance that they would have gone through the coming of age rites in and been initiated into their respective culture, and so learned enough to be able to modify its practices upon reaching the New World.

Given this possibility of their limited knowledge of their complex culture, and forced into a scenario with people from similar-but-different cultures, it is possible that multiple cultures interacted with each other to form a single, unified culture that everyone on a given plantation could understand. This would yield a potentially endless combination of cultural interactions at each plantation. This is exemplified by the deposits at the Levi Jordan plantation having more Yoruban influence than other plantations, seen mainly by the presence of an amula and iron in their sub-floor 'Crossroads Deposit.'

The presence of these 'Crossroads Deposits' at a variety of sites across the southern United States seems to indicate that there was some common way of thinking between the enslaved populations on plantations. Captured and enslaved Africans, possibly coming from different geographic or cultural regions, would enable such a phenomenon of mixing cultures to exist across a wide area of the New World. Regardless of what this thesis finds about Africans

and African Americans both retaining and creating their own culture under the pressure of enslavement in their daily lives of the enslaved population at Magnolia Plantation, the presence of more ‘Crossroads Deposits’ could be discovered at other plantations, and the concept in general deserves further study.

Chapter 3

Data and Discussion

The examination of the data recovered from excavations at the Magnolia quarters will be divided into three parts. The first will be a discussion of the methods used to excavate the artifacts, and how the artifacts were cleaned, cataloged, checked for accuracy, and input into a computer-based database for study. The second part will be a discussion about what types of artifacts this thesis looks for to determine patterned use of a kitchen versus a personal or private room, and how these are identified. The final part shall consist of the findings themselves, and how they relate back to the topic of this thesis: the examination of any patterns of room usage across two cabins, and if that pattern is related to ideas symbolized by the Crossroads Symbol.

Archaeological Methods

Dr. Kenneth L. Brown directed excavations into the Magnolia quarters between 2005 and 2011. The *unit* size used was a *3x3* (three feet square). The first level was usually excavated as a *3x3*, but the desire to pinpoint where a deposited artifact was likely used meant that each *lot* was scaled down to a one-square-foot *subunit* excavated to a *level* (depth) of 0.1 feet - or 1.2 inches - and bagged as a single *lot*. This means that all artifacts within a flat surface area and predetermined depth were all grouped together. Any artifact that was large enough to impact multiple levels was grouped in the lot and level where the base of the artifact rested. Brown and field excavators took notes to document what artifacts were found in each lot, as well as made drawings of how the artifacts in the lot were deposited *in situ*, and if anything of interest intersected the lot from another lot or other unique instances.

Figure 3.1 A picture of a 3x3 unit being excavated. The three bricks in the middle can be seen raised in situ on 1x1 (one foot square) sections.

Each *lot* was bagged in a brown paper bag, and the details about where the lot was located within the site were written on the front of the bag. The artifacts stayed in these bags until they were transported to the Archaeology Lab at the University of Houston for cleaning. Before being cleaned, the information on the paper bag was carefully cut out, and all artifacts were emptied into a clear plastic bag with the *lot tag* from the paper bag where they awaited cleaning.

Undergraduates at the University of Houston carried out the cleaning and used different cleaning procedures depending on what kind of material they were cleaning: brushing with water was only used for bone, ceramics, and glass, while metal brushes were used for rusty and corroded metal, and dry brushes were used for more delicate artifacts. Some artifacts - such as eggshell, fish scale, charcoal, brick and mortar, etc. - were not cleaned at all and simply placed on a drying plate to await re-bagging and cataloging. All artifacts from the same lot were placed on a drying plate with the *lot tag* underneath a paper towel - the paper towel had the lot number

written on it to avoid confusion or mis-bagging - and once the artifacts were dry they were rebagged into their same lot bags and taken to be cataloged.

Undergraduates who had worked in the Archaeology Lab for at least a semester and showed a devoted interest to archaeology as a field did most of the cataloging. However, for the last semester, undergraduates in intro classes who had little to no experience working with artifacts also did cataloging. To ensure accuracy, undergraduates who had worked in the lab for at least a semester, showed a devoted interest to the field of archaeology, and had a good record of correctly identifying artifacts performed secondary 'checking' to ensure the accuracy of the initial cataloging.

Brown developed a system used to catalog all the artifacts. Each artifact or set of identical artifacts was weighed, counted, and received a *lot tag* where the provenience of the lot was written out again and an *artifact code* was given. Each code consisted of three components: *material*, *sub-material*, and *artifact class*. Brown's system includes six large *material* groups - like ceramics, metals, and ecology - and a variety of *sub-materials* depending on what material was chosen. Sub-materials for ceramics included the types of ceramics Brown chose to look for: earthenware, porcelain, china, etc. Glassware listed different colors of glass, and ecology listed species like bird, mammal non-human, reptile, etc. The third element was *artifact class* which was a more specific interpretation of the artifact: plain sherds, doll pieces, beads, buttons, nails, thimbles, unmodified bone, charcoal, comb teeth, etc.

After students cataloged each lot, all the artifacts, cataloged information, weight, quantity, and special notes about the artifacts were recorded onto a *catalog sheet* - also bearing the provenience of the lot - and checked. After a lot was checked to ensure identification

accuracy, the artifacts were stored in a box with all the lots that came from a specific *unit*, and the catalog sheets were taken and entered into a Microsoft Access database created by Kris Brown. This database allowed for specific queries to be made regarding what kinds of artifacts were found in a certain location, and looking for occurrences of a particular artifact across the site. I used this database to examine artifact distribution in both of the cabins for this thesis.

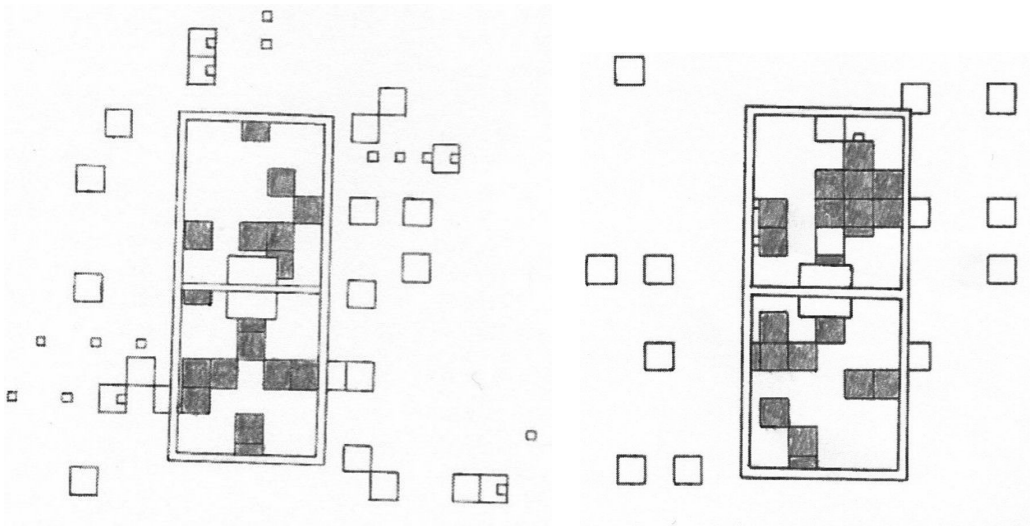
Defining the Space

This study included the artifacts from beneath two complete residential cabins - Cabin 3 and Cabin 4. Cabin 1 - the suspected curer's cabin - would also have been included in this study but for extenuating circumstances: the National Parks Service removed the top levels of the cabin floor - the ones corresponding to the period after Emancipation - and therefore the cabin is regarded as 'incomplete.' The artifacts and information that have been recovered from Cabin 1 will be used as reference, however.

As mentioned before, this study has a few limitations. One is the modern impact of Cabin 1 that makes any comparison between the two complete cabins a comparison between cabins with different functions - Cabin 4 primarily as a residence and Cabin 3 as a residence/commerce area. Another limitation is the cabin floors. Because the cabin originally had dirt floors, artifact deposition would have been negatively impacted until the installation of raised wooden plank floors in the 1940s. In addition, the northern room of Cabin 4 had linoleum floors, which would have also impacted artifact deposition there were no spaces for artifacts to fall into the space between the raised floor and the dirt below. The area with linoleum was not excavated because of a desire to preserve the remaining linoleum floor; a find like this in a quarters cabin is

extremely rare, and excavation into the floor would have completely destroyed it. Interesting to note is that this linoleum in the kitchen could be regarded as a status symbol: having it in the 'public interaction' space would have made quite an impression on visitors.

The original excavations directed by Brown in Cabin 3 - done after Cabin 4 - were not geared towards finding a pattern of use based on directionality in the house; instead it was an attempt to locate commercial activity in Cabin 3. Because of this, an unequal distribution is found between unit frequency and location in the northern and southern rooms of Cabin 3, whereas in Cabin 4 they are more similar. Also, at the time of writing, two units from the northern room of Cabin 4 were not included in this study. Due to the high number of units recovered from this site, those two units were not cataloged and integrated into the database before the writing of this thesis.



Figures 3.2 and 3.3 Excavation maps of units for Cabins 3 (left) and 4 (right). Darkened units indicate units used in this study. The two non-darkened units from the northern room of Cabin 4 are units that were unable to be cataloged and examined by the time of this thesis.

In order to distinguish if one of the two rooms was used as a kitchen more often than the second room, those artifacts that are more associated with kitchens - ceramics sherds from bowls, plates, table glassware, ecology such as bones or charcoal, etc. - will be examined for distribution, as well as artifacts that are more personal/private - marbles, pipes, etc. Prevalence of kitchen-related artifacts in one room over another will indicate that said room was most likely utilized as the kitchen space. If that room corresponds to the northernmost room of the cabin, then it is possible that directionality and the Crossroads Symbol - with the direction North linked to a person's height of power, documented in the modern-day Gullah as associated with a family's kitchen - affected the daily lives of the enslaved and later tenant farmer population at the Magnolia quarters.

Not included in the artifacts but documented in the field notes is an additional interesting and perhaps telling feature. In the northern rooms of all the cabins standing cabins at Magnolia, holes were cut into the side of the chimney for a wood-stove vent attachment (Brown 2018). In Cabin 4, the metal plate has four indents that correspond approximately to the four legs of a wood-burning stove used at the time (Brown 2018). These features were put in after the expansion to have both rooms occupied by a single family in all cases, which seems to be an additional argument for the kitchen being placed in the northern room in a more tangible and obvious way.

Figures 3.4 and 3.5 (left) One of the holes drilled into the existing chimney-stack in the northern room of Cabin 3; all the cabins that still had standing chimneys had this feature in the northern room chimney. (right) A picture from 1945 of the northern room of Cabin 3, with wood-burning stove located near the chimney, showing that this room most likely served - at least during that time - as a kitchen.

What was Found

Earthenware Ceramics

Earthenware ceramics would have most likely been used as plates, bowls, and vessels for eating. The cataloging system used was less detailed about the specific type of ceramic (pearlware, ironware, etc.) and instead was focused on separating sherds by their general appearance.

EARTHENWARE SHERD DISTRIBUTION IN CABIN 3

Cabin Room	Earthenware Sherds	Total
northern	28	28
southern	28	28

Table 1 Number of plain and decorated earthenware sherds found in both rooms of Cabin 3.

EARTHENWARE SHERD DISTRIBUTION IN CABIN 4

Cabin Room	Earthenware Sherds	Total
northern	77	77
southern	67	67

Table 2 Number of plain and decorated earthenware sherds found in both rooms of Cabin 4.

- Cabin 3 had earthenware sherds distributed *equally* between the northern and southern rooms.
- Cabin 4 had a higher quantity of earthenware sherds in the northern room over the southern room.

The pattern found in Cabin 4 seems to indicate that the northern room was used more frequently as the dining area, however nothing prevents food from being eaten in the southern room, such as when someone is sick and needs food brought to them, eating meals in the room other than the kitchen - a trend that is seen in families today - and other associated choices.

Cabin 3, however, has an interesting distribution of earthenware sherds, and this could be because of the cabin's function in the community. Oral histories gathered from previous residents of the plantation quarters indicate that Cabin 3 was the place someone went to 'get a slice of cake and a glass of whisky.' (Brown 2018) This commerce activity most likely took

place through one of the doors of the two-room cabin after a single household took over both rooms, until the installation of a window in the southern room and later plank addition to the cabin (Brown 2018, Cole 2013). This activity could explain why an equal amount of serving/eating ware sherds were found in the southern room as in the northern room.

Pipes

In current historical archaeology, pipes are considered personal items that one can use both publicly and privately.

PIPE STEM AND BOWL DISTRIBUTION IN CABIN 3

Cabin Room	Pipe Stems	Pipe Bowls	Total
northern	0	0	0
southern	0	3	3

Table 3 Number of pipe stem and bowl distribution from both rooms of Cabin 3.

PIPE STEM AND BOWL DISTRIBUTION IN CABIN 4

Cabin Room	Pipe Stems	Pipe Bowls	Total
northern	2	9	11
southern	1	1	2

Table 4 Number of pipe stem and bowl distribution from both rooms of Cabin 4.

- Cabin 3 had more pipes in the **southern** room than the northern room, consisting of only pipe bowls.
- Cabin 4 had more pipes in the northern room than the southern room, consisting of bowls and one stem per room.

This pattern would fit with the use of pipes in a public area. With the southern room of Cabin 3 being used as a kind of 'restaurant,' the presence of more pipe fragments in that room seems to indicate that people did most of their smoking in or around that room - especially given the absence of pipe fragments in the northern room. In Cabin 4, the idea of pipes being used publicly fits with the hypothesis of the family's 'public interaction' room being placed in the northern room, which had a higher frequency of pipe fragments.

Sewing Objects

The hypothesis used in this thesis put sewing-related artifacts (such as needles, straight and safety pins, scissors, and thimbles) found more in the northern room of the cabins consistent with being considered a social activity such as sewing circle groups, both today and in the past; however, the distribution seems to indicate otherwise.

SEWING OBJECT DISTRIBUTION IN CABIN 3

Cabin Room	Needles	Scissors	Thimbles	Straight Pins	Safety Pins	Total
northern	0	0	0	2	5	7
southern	1	1	1	24	11	29

Table 5 Number of sewing-related objects found in both rooms of Cabin 3.

SEWING OBJECT DISTRIBUTION IN CABIN 4

Cabin Room	Needles	Scissors	Thimbles	Straight Pins	Safety Pins	Total
northern	0	0	1	11	10	22
southern	29	0	0	107	19	155

Table 6 Number of sewing-related objects found in both rooms of Cabin 4. The high number of needles could be due to mis-identifying; re-checking of the artifacts showed that only 3 of the artifacts were identifiably needles, the rest were possible fragments of what could have been either straight pins or wire.

- Cabin 3 had more objects in the **southern** room of the cabin, including the only pair of scissors and thimble found in Cabin 3.
- Cabin 4 had far more objects in the **southern** room: the southern room had 29 needle and needle fragments, as well as 107 straight pin fragments; the northern room had the only thimble found in Cabin 4.

The high quantity of sewing-related artifacts found in the southern rooms of both cabins seem to indicate that sewing was considered a more private activity. The hypothesis of this thesis was that sewing, such as mending of clothes and lost buttons, would be done in the 'public interaction' room, so the person mending could keep an eye on any children or food cooking, as well as being present for public interactions. However, the presence of these artifacts in higher quantities in the southern room indicates that it was more commonly chosen for that practice. In addition, the high quantity of straight pins in Cabin 4 could indicate creation or modification of clothing items was being done in that room - straight pins in sewing are more used for holding pieces of fabric together when making or hemming a dress or other clothing; safety pins are more used for holding quilts or other thicker fabrics together.

If this is true, and the southern room was used for sewing/mending in Cabin 4, then it could possibly indicate a directional trend in room use across the tro cabins examined. Cabin 3 had commercial activity in the southern room in the form of food distribution. If Cabin 4 had mending or alterations in the southern room, then it would suggest a pattern of commercial activity being placed in the southern room of the cabins by the tenant farmer population. This hypothesis requires further excavation of complete cabins at Magnolia Plantation to confirm.

Clothing Objects

Objects that are related to articles of clothing - eyes, hooks, rivets and grommets, buckles, zipper parts, beads, and buttons - would be expected to be found in the private room of the cabins, where people would most likely be getting dressed and multiple sewing-related artifacts in the southern room where mending of these items evidently took place.

CLOTHING OBJECT DISTRIBUTION IN CABIN 3

Cabin Room	Rivets /Eyes/ Snaps/ Hooks	Stockings	Buckles	Buttons	Beads	Zippers	Jewelry	Total
northern	10	0	0	72	9	0	7	98
southern	10	0	1	104	26	2	17	160

Table 7 Number of clothing-related artifacts found in both rooms of Cabin 3.

CLOTHING OBJECT DISTRIBUTION IN CABIN 4

Cabin Room	Rivets /Eyes/ Snaps/ Hooks	Stockings	Buckles	Buttons	Beads	Zippers	Jewelry	Total
northern	15	5	1	90	15	0	34	160
southern	10	6	4	170	13	2	12	217

Table 8 Number of clothing-related artifacts found in both rooms of Cabin 4.

- Cabin 3 had more clothing-related objects in the **southern** room, including far more buttons in the **southern** room over the northern room.
- Cabin 4 had far more clothing-related objects in the **southern** room, including a large discrepancy in the number of buttons found.

The prevalence of clothing-related artifacts in the southern room over the northern room seems to indicate that the southern room was more frequently chosen as a room where either people got dressed, where clothes were stored, or where small objects from the clothes fell off when dressing and undressing. While it is true that these small objects, like buttons, fall off where they happen to be at the time, the frequency of finding these artifacts in larger quantities in one room over the other seems to point to a pattern the pieces of clothing with these objects are more frequently used or mended in that room.

BUTTON MATERIAL COMPOSITION AND DISTRIBUTION IN CABIN 3

Cabin Room	Ceramic	Glass	Metal	Plastic	Ecological (bone/shell)	Total
northern	6	6	11	26	23	72
southern	10	1	18	47	28	104

Table 9 Material of the buttons found in Cabin 3.

BUTTON MATERIAL COMPOSITION AND DISTRIBUTION IN CABIN 4

Cabin Room	Ceramic	Glass	Metal	Plastic	Ecological (bone/shell)	Total
northern	10	6	15	22	37	90
southern	45	3	17	23	82	170

Table 10 Material of the buttons found in Cabin 4.

BEAD DISTRIBUTION BY TYPE IN CABIN 3

Cabin Room	Spherical Bead	Cylindrical Bead	"Seed" Bead	Cut Glass Bead	Metal Bead	Bone Bead	Total
northern	7	0	2	0	0	0	9
southern	21	4	1	0	0	0	26

Table 11 Shape of the beads found in Cabin 3.

BEAD DISTRIBUTION BY TYPE IN CABIN 4

Cabin Room	Spherical Bead	Cylindrical Bead	"Seed" Bead	Cut Glass Bead	Metal Bead	Bone Bead	Total
northern	10	0	1	1	1	2	15
southern	5	4	0	0	2	2	13

Table 12 Shape of the beads found in Cabin 4.

The frequency of buttons is higher in the southern rooms of both cabins, which seems to indicate that this was an area where buttons falling off or being handled was common. Indeed, the southern room of Cabin 4 - which might have housed commercial sewing/mending/alteration - has 170 buttons of varying materials. The higher number of buttons in the southern room of Cbain 3 also seem to indicate that the southern room was used for dressing and undressing, as this was when buttons were most likely lost or mended back onto clothing. Beads are harder to assign to one particular room, as there is variance between the cabins. There are far more buttons in the southern room of Cabin 3, but more equal numbers in Cabin 4. The use of such beads here is unknown, and are being included as part of clothing objects.

Utensils

The presence of utensils such as knives, forks, and spoons, would be expected to be found in the room where the residents of the cabins would frequently eat.

UTENSIL DISTRIBUTION IN CABIN 3

Cabin Room	Pocket Knife	Straight Knife	Spoon	Fork	Knife	Indeterminate	Total
northern	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
southern	0	0	1	0	0	9	10

Table 13 Types of utensils found in both rooms of Cabin 3.

UTENSIL DISTRIBUTION IN CABIN 4

Cabin Room	Pocket Knife	Straight Knife	Spoon	Fork	Knife (utensil)	Indeterminate	Total
northern	2	1	5	0	3	1	12
southern	3	2	0	0	0	3	8

Table 14 Types of utensils found in both rooms of Cabin 4.

- Cabin 3 had more utensils in the **southern** room of the cabin, with the two utensil fragments in the northern most likely being a pocket knife and razor handle, while the southern fragments were one spoon bowl and nine handle fragments.
- Cabin 4 had more utensil fragments in the northern room, including 2 pocket knife blades in the northern and 3 in the southern, as well as the handle of a teaspoon measuring spoon found in the northern room.

The split in frequencies between these two rooms can again be explained by the commerce activity that took place in Cabin 3. If the southern room of Cabin 3 functioned as a kind of 'restaurant,' it would make sense for more utensil fragments to be found in this room. For Cabin 4, the presence of a teaspoon measuring handle in the northern room seems to point to the fact that it was utilized at some time as a kitchen, as it is a very specialized kitchen object. It could have been misplaced by a child during play or during a move, however, since this is a useful kitchen object I can see the owner attempting to keep it in the room where it was most used: in the kitchen.

Figure 3.6 Picture of the teaspoon measuring handle from Cabin 4. Very faintly can be made out the lettering "1 TEA SPOON."

Toys

According to the hypothesis of this thesis, the appearance of toys would have been split between the two rooms. It would not have been uncommon for children to take toys out into the yard of the cabins or into the 'public interaction' room so that parents could keep an eye on their children during the day, however, the storage of these toys would most likely have been in the private room of the cabins once play had ended for the day. Here, these toys included are cast metal figures, plastic toys, marbles, and doll parts.

TOY DISTRIBUTION BY TYPE IN CABIN 3

Cabin Room	Doll Parts	Plastic Toys	Metals Toys	Bone Toys (dice)	Marbles	Total
northern	2	3	0	1	5	11
southern	2	9	1	1	26	39

Table 15 Types of toys found in both rooms of Cabin 3.

TOY DISTRIBUTION BY TYPE IN CABIN 4

Cabin Room	Doll Parts	Plastic Toys	Metals Toys	Bone Toys (dice)	Marbles	Total
northern	11	12	0	0	23	46
southern	25	4	2	0	31	61

Table 16 Types of toys found in both rooms of Cabin 4.

- Cabin 3 had more toys in the **southern** room, with far more marbles being in this room as well.
- Cabin 4 had more toys in the **southern** room, with more marbles and far more doll parts in this room.

These findings support the hypothesis about the distribution of toys: while some toys are found in the northern 'public interaction' rooms of both cabins, far higher quantities of toys appear in the southern rooms, seeming to indicate a higher chance for loss in these rooms.

Coins

COIN DISTRIBUTION BY TYPE IN CABIN 3

Cabin Room	Penny	Nickel	Dime	Quarter	Misc.	Tax Tokens	Total
northern	7	8	0	0	0	1	16
southern	8	8	2	2	1	0	20

Table 17 Types of coins found in cabin 3. The one miscellaneous coin is a German pfennig.

COIN DISTRIBUTION BY TYPE IN CABIN 4

Cabin Room	Penny	Nickel	Dime	Quarter	Misc.	Tax Tokens	Total
northern	24	9	1	0	0	4	38
southern	23	9	2	1	3	5	42

Table 18 Types of coins found in Cabin 4. One of the miscellaneous coins is indeterminate, two are not listed as to what value they are. One of the dimes in the southern room has been perforated.

- Cabin 3 had more coins in the **southern** room.
- Cabin 4 had more coins in the **southern** room.

The slightly higher number of coins being found in the southern room of Cabin 3 seems to give archaeological evidence to the fact that commercial activity was being carried out in that room. In addition, the slightly higher number of coins in the southern room of Cabin 4 could be another indication that it was used for commercial activity as well. The coins that have been recovered from Cabin 1 seem to follow the pattern found in Cabin 4.

Ecology

If the northern room was used as a 'public interaction' room and also as a kitchen, then it would be expected that a higher number of cooked-food/ecological-related items would be found in this room over the southern room; items such as bird, mammal, and reptile bone (in the form of turtles and sometimes snakes), eggshell from mainly chicken eggs, and fish scales.

ECOLOGICAL ARTIFACTS FOUND IN CABIN 3

Cabin Room	Bone	Eggshell	Fish Scales	Total
northern	424	721	28	1173
southern	828	56	23	907

Table 19 Types of ecological artifacts found in both rooms of Cabin 3. A complete rat skeleton consisting of 142 bones was found in the southern room and is not relevant to this study, therefore the entire skeleton was counted as a single bone. (Total including all 142 rat bones is 1048.)

ECOLOGICAL ARTIFACTS FOUND IN CABIN 4

Cabin Room	Bone	Eggshell	Fish Scales	Total
northern	1860	296	207	2363
southern	1061	284	31	1376

Table 20 Types of ecological artifacts found in both rooms of Cabin 4.

- Cabin 3 had more ecological artifacts in the northern room, including 721 eggshell fragments. Note: a complete rat skeleton consisting of 142 bones wrapped in baling twine in the southern room was counted as a single occurrence of bone; however even including all 142 bones in the total count still shows more ecological artifacts in the northern room.

- Cabin 4 had almost double the amount of ecological artifacts in the northern room as in the southern room, including 207 fish scales in the northern room.

This finding suggests that on average, more food-preparation activities took place in the northern room over the southern room. The high quantities of bone, eggshell, and fish scales in the northern room across both cabins seems to point to a common pattern of use. The high number of ecological artifacts in the southern rooms are most likely a product of the occupation before a single family took over both rooms. Prior to this each family in a room utilized the hearth to cook with, meaning that there could have been large amounts of ecological/food preparation artifacts deposited in the southern room before both rooms were included in a single household.

Summary and Conclusions

These data seem to indicate that a patterned choice to room use emerged in at least these two cabins in the Magnolia quarters. The presence of both cooking and eating-related artifacts, as well as 'public interaction'-type artifacts consistently being found in the northern rooms of both cabins indicates that residents frequently chose these rooms for public interaction and the kitchen location after a family gained control of both rooms of the cabin. Conversely, objects that are more related to private or personal use - such as clothing items, toys, and sewing-related objects - being found in much greater quantities in the southern rooms seems to indicate that generally residents chose these rooms as the place for private or personal activities or the storage of associated objects. Another interesting finding is that the southern room of Cabin 4 seems to have been chosen to house a commercial activity of sewing/mending/alterations. The much

higher number of sewing-related artifacts in the southern room when compared to the northern room or either room in Cabin 3, suggests that some kind of major sewing-related activity was taking place in this room. And with the oral history identifying the southern room of Cabin 3 as having a commercial function, the high quantity of these artifacts could point to a similar pattern in Cabin 4 of placing commercial activity in the southern room. It would be interesting to see if this is a pattern that is more widespread across the remaining cabins at Magnolia, as the inclusion of only Cabins 3 and 4 limits our ability to show clear-cut conclusions as to the consistent patterning of room function that a larger sample size would provide.

Again, one of the limitations of this study is the inability to use Cabin 1 as a comparison. Because the floor and subsequent archaeological deposits beneath the cabin were completely removed, it is challenging to use this cabin in an analytical manner. If we had been able to use Cabin 1 more extensively, it might have shown more clear-cut patterns of use when compared to Cabins 3 and 4, possibly revealing a consistent pattern with Cabin 4 and dissimilar from Cabin 3. Another limitation is that of the cabin floors themselves. The original floors were packed dirt floors until the 1940s wooden floor additions. Packed dirt floors negatively impact archaeological deposition of larger artifacts, as it would have been easy to pick a dropped object off the floor or sweep it into the yard, meaning it would not have been deposited into the archaeological context and so not recovered during excavations. With wooden plank floors, objects that are dropped have a chance of falling into the cracks between the floorboards and being deposited into the space between the raised floorboards and the dirt below. Therefore, these data and conclusions really reflect only the the occupation after the installation of the raised wooden floors in the 1940s; the inclusion of the holes drilled into the sides of the

chimneys for the wood stove ventilations, however, predate the installation of wooden floors, being made in the 1900s when one family took over both rooms. This means that any cultural patterns shown through these data are continued effects and holdovers of past traditions established by the residents of the quarters, and do not reflect the creation or evolution of these traditions which occurred during enslavement.

Even with these limitations, this is a significant finding for the field of African American archaeology, as it indicates that a general consensus was reached among at least two families in the Magnolia quarters to place the kitchen/'public interaction' room in the northernmost room. The distribution of kitchen-related artifacts versus personal or what could be considered 'commercial' artifacts is shown to have a difference between the northern and southern rooms of both cabins. In addition, the evidence of there having been wood-burning stoves placed in the northern rooms of all the standing cabins - shown through historical photographs and the holes cut into the chimneys of the northern rooms in the standing cabins - indicates that the northern room room was probably used at least for cooking. While this particular study is limited to two cabins from the Magnolia quarters, currently two other relatively intact cabins in the quarters have yet to be excavated as intensely as Cabins 3 and 4. Cabin 6 had a portion of the wall collapse and the National Parks Service tested the interior of the cabin for artifacts after this collapse, but excavations never went any further; Cabin 7, also completely intact, has been relatively untouched like Cabin 4, but time restraints prevented excavations in that cabin. Therefore Magnolia Plantation still has a few additional cabins that can be excavated and examined to see if this pattern of placing the kitchen/'public interaction' room in the

northernmost room and personal/private room in the southernmost room holds up among multiple cabins in this location.

It is significant that such a strong pattern of room use is present in these two cabins. These findings do show a deliberate decision by the inhabitants to place the kitchen in one room over the other after gaining control of both rooms in the early 1900s, and that this pattern was followed by at least one other family into the 1960s. In addition, this study has revealed a possible commercial craft activity in the southern room of Cabin 4 - sewing/mending/alterations - which could support the hypothesis that kitchens were placed in the northernmost room of the cabins while private and/or commercial rooms were placed in the southernmost rooms. This could have been a cultural norm within the community or merely a decision shared by two households in the quarters. It will take further excavation of the remaining intact cabins to see if this is a widespread phenomenon at the Magnolia quarters. If it is, then this would indicate a common way of thinking among many inhabitants of the quarters, perhaps a cultural thought, that kitchens and 'public interaction' rooms should be placed in the North, while more private, personal rooms should be placed in the South. If true, it indicates the existence of a common culture with unique norms that were shared by members of the community based on West African beliefs of directionality.

The assertion that vividly African culture existed among enslaved Africans and African Americans on plantations in the southeastern United States - that utilized the 'task' system as proposed by Morgan - loses some credibility through this study. A pattern has been established in at least two cabins at the Magnolia Plantation in Louisiana showing a consistent placing of the kitchen in the northern room and the more private - possibly commercial - room in the southern

room. This plantation would have used the ‘gang’ system according to Morgan as it produced tobacco and later switched to cotton production. However, like the Frogmore and Richmond Hill plantations - which were under the ‘task’ system - the Magnolia plantation exhibits two ‘Crossroads Deposits:’ one beneath the curer’s cabin and the other beneath the northern room of a residential cabin. This, along with the ‘Crossroads Deposits’ at the Levi Jordan plantation in Texas, shows that the concept of placing artifacts with certain meanings in a specific pattern beneath important community structures was not limited to plantations where there was little European American influence. In addition, the established pattern of placing the kitchen in the northernmost room of at least two cabins at Magnolia appears to mirror the tradition among the Gullah and Geechee cultures of having the kitchen/’public interaction’ space in the northernmost room. This means that such a concept among enslaved and later tenant farmer African Americans was not unique to the Sea Islands and Carolina lowcountry.

As this pattern has been established at Magnolia, it might also be present in other plantation quarters across the southern United States. As it has been documented, similar cultural ideas - the Crossroads Symbol, praise houses, traditional African healers/midwives, etc. - have been found across plantations in the southern United States (Brown 2011, 2015, 2018, Creel 1988, Fennell 2003, 2010a, Guthrie 1996, Wilkie 1997), leaving reason to believe that a pattern such as this could be found in the quarters of these plantations. It would take careful excavation in the northern and southern sections of the cabins in the quarters and comparison of the artifacts found in each section to see if a marked difference in the artifacts is found, and if kitchen/public artifacts are found more in the northern room, and personal/private artifacts are found in the southern room.

African American archaeology is still a relatively new field within the larger field of archaeology. The findings of this study seem to indicate - contrary to the earlier beliefs held by African American archaeology and historians - that enslaved Africans and African Americans seemed to have their own culture, shown here through the patterned use of homes after gaining control of multiple rooms. After spreading into both rooms, it could be suggested that the household that stayed in the cabin after the other household moved out would have kept their one-room kitchen where it was originally; this would be far less work than to move everything that had been set up over the years to the opposite side.

With this influx of new families and families who were using one of the rooms as a kitchen already, a consistent pattern throughout the quarters of placing a household's kitchen in the northern room would point to a shared cultural idea in the quarters, which even took in newcomers and adapted to fit their cultural ideas as well. Such a concept can be seen in Cabin 4 with the occupation of the Creole family. With the 'Crossroads Deposit' in the northern room of this cabin possibly including an above-ground Catholic altar, it could show an adaptation of the family to include traditions present in the quarters and their own ideological beliefs.

If the conclusions of this thesis are true, and if this directional pattern is common on other plantations as well, then this is a major breakthrough in the field of African American archaeology. It shows a consistent pattern of room use, perhaps guided by originally African cultural/ideological beliefs, that persisted throughout time and is clearly measurable by current archaeological standards. It would be beneficial to carry this study to other plantation quarters in the southern United States to see if this pattern is consistent across a much wider area. If found to be consistent across plantations, then that would be a massive discovery in the early development

of African American culture, thoroughly dismissing the currently held idea that enslaved Africans and African Americans acculturated to European American culture and did not form any of their own cultural ideas or practices.

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