

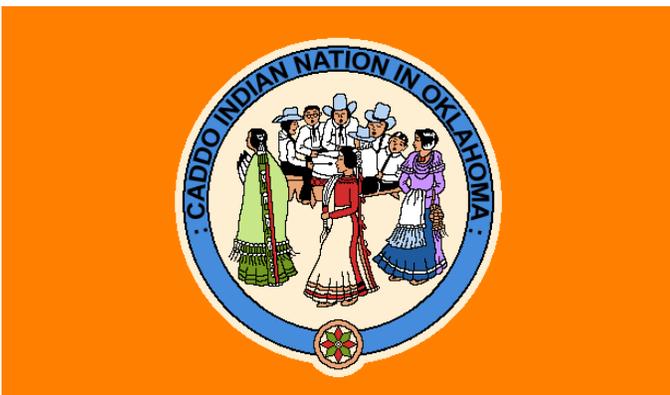
Oklahoma Indian Education Tribal Guide: The Caddo Nation of Oklahoma

Tribal Seal/Flag/Website

Tribal Seal:



Tribal Flag:



Tribal Website: <https://mycaddonation.com/>



Migration/Movement/Forced Removal

Caddo Origins

Northwestern Louisiana was occupied by the Caddo Indians during the period of early Spanish, French, and American contacts. By combining history and archaeology, the Caddo story can be traced back for a thousand years—a unique opportunity made possible by a long tradition of distinctive traits, especially in pottery forms and decorations. The story of the Caddo Indians in Louisiana, therefore, begins around A.D. 800-900 and can be traced by archaeology well into the historic period.

The center of Caddoan occupation during contact times and throughout their prehistoric development was along Red River and its tributaries, with extensions to other river valleys in the four-state area of northern Louisiana, southwestern Arkansas, eastern Texas, and eastern Oklahoma. The Caddo are one of the few tribes who have inhabited the region around the Red valley region for thousands of years. The Caddo main homeland was located south of the Arkansas River in the valleys and tributaries of the Quachita, Red, Sabine and Neches rivers.

In 1723, to counter French attempts at establishing a western trade, the Spanish established an outpost, Nuestra Senora del Pilar de Los Adaes (Bolton 1914). The Spanish presidio, or fort, became a hub for clandestine traders—French, Indian, and Spanish—and lasted for some 50 years (Gregory 1974). Horses, cattle, and Lipan Apache (Connechi) slaves were traded via Los Adaes, and by the mid-eighteenth century the Spanish governors had named the site the capital of Spanish Texas.

The Caddo-Adaes, Natchitoches, Ouachita, Doustioni, and all the others—were caught between the political and economic machinations of the European powers. Gradually, the seesaw of European boundaries crossed what the Caddo all knew as their tribal territories. Traders resided in their larger communities, and seasonal hunts to the west tied them to the mercantile policies of the French and Spanish. After Louisiana was ceded to Spain at the end of the French and Indian War; French traders were left in charge of most Indian affairs in Louisiana because of the quality of their relationship to the Indians. For example, Athanase de Mezieres (Bolton 1914), St. Denis's son-in-law, became a power on the frontier because of his close relationship to the Caddo.

Caddoan-European ties remained close until 1803 when the Louisiana Purchase brought Anglo-Americans into contact with the Caddoan groups. The Anglo-Americans had new trade and military policies, and in spite of their agreement to recognize all prior treaties between France, Spain, and Indian tribes, they were not very careful to do this. The French and Spanish had ratified land sales by tribes and had insisted that their citizens respect Caddoan land and sovereignty, but the Americans saw new lands with few settlements, and were quick to encourage white settlement. The old Caddo-French-Spanish symbiosis



was ending.

The Caddoan-speaking groups began to move together by the late eighteenth century. The Kadohadacho apparently absorbed several smaller groups—Upper Natchitoches, Nanatsoho, and Nasoni—and shifted south. Osage raids had taken their toll and the Kadohadacho moved to Caddo Prairie, farther from the plains, on marginal land (Swanton 1942). They settled on the hills to the southwest of the prairie (Soda Lake) near modern Caddo Station and added their numbers to the other Red River tribes in Louisiana.

Beset by many problems, the American agents at Natchitoches began moving the agency about, trying to keep the Caddo away from white settlements. It was moved to Grand Ecore, Sulphur Fork, Caddo Prairie, and finally to Bayou Pierre about six to seven miles south of Shreveport (Williams 1964).

The Louisiana Caddoans also found themselves estranged from their cultural kinsmen in eastern Texas. First, the East Texas tribes remained under Spanish domination while their neighbors were American. Policies in Texas were quite different until the Texas Revolution and the foundation of the Republic in the 1830s and 1840s. The new Texans refused to allow old patterns of trade and traverse for fear of having to deal with even larger Indian populations.

The Caddoan tribes were consolidated enough by 1834 that the American agents had begun to treat them as though they were a single group. The term Caddo, an abbreviated cover term for Kadohadacho, one of the larger groups, began to cover all the tribes in the American period. It was this amalgam of tribal units with which the United States decided to deal.

On June 25-26, 1835, some 489 Caddo gathered at the Caddo Agency seven or eight miles south of Shreveport on Bayou Pierre and on July 1, 1835, they agreed to sell to the United States approximately one million acres of land in the area above Texarkana, Arkansas, south to De Soto Parish, Louisiana (Swanton 1942). Two chiefs, Tarsher (Wolf) and Tsauninot, were the leaders of the Caddoan groups present at the land cession.

Present also at the land cession was their interpreter, Larkin Edwards, a man they regarded so highly that they reserved him a sizable piece of land (McClure and Howe 1937; Swanton 1942). Further, the treaty reserved a sizable block of land for the mixed Caddo-French Grappe family. Descended from a Kadohadacho woman and a French settler, Francois Grappe had served his people well. His efforts to protect not only the Caddo, but also the Bidai and others in East Texas, from American traders had resulted in his termination as chief interpreter for the American agents. The Caddoan people continued to respect and honor him.



The Caddo were to be paid \$80,000, of which \$30,000 was in goods delivered at the signing, and the remainder in annual \$10,000 installments for another five years. Immediately Tarsher led his people into Texas and settled on the Brazos River; much to the chagrin of Texas authorities (Gullick 1921). Another group, led by Chief Cissany, stayed in Louisiana. They lived near Caddo Station in 1842 (seven years after the land cession). Texicans actually invaded the United States to insist that the Caddos disarm, the rumor in Texas being that the American agent had armed the Caddo and made incendiary remarks regarding the new republic. The Louisiana chiefs offered to go to Nacogdoches as hostages to show their good faith, but the Texicans refused them on the grounds it might mean recognition of Caddoan land rights and polity in Texas (Gullick 1921).

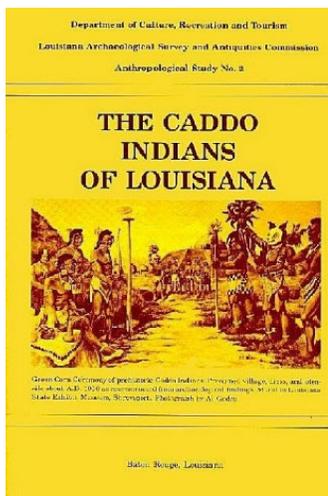
Eventually these Louisiana Caddo left-their credit was cut off by local merchants, their payments ended, and the United States protection was failing-and headed for the Kiamichi River country in Oklahoma. The Caddoan presence in Louisiana, after a millennium, or more, was over.

In the Indian Territory, the Caddo were placed on the Wichita reservation. They left the Wichita reservation during the Civil War from 1861 to 1867. In 1867, they returned to the Wichita reservation and in 1874, they were given their own Caddo reservation. In 1893, the Dawes Commission was set up by the United States government to get the Indian tribes to give up their reservations and tribal governments. The Dawes Commission thought the best way to destroy the old Indian culture was to privatize Indian land. They wanted to divide up Indian land and give an allotment to each Indian family. Allotment means dividing something up and allotting (giving) the parts to individuals. An allotment is like a share. The Indians did not like this and argued against it. The land that was not allotted was to be sold to white settlers and there was a lot of it. White settlers wanted the Indian land.

In 1901, the United States government dissolved the Caddo reservation under the Dawes Act and divided the land up among the families. This division of the land was called allotment. Each family was given 160 acres of land that they owned. Before this, the tribe owned all the land as is common on Indian reservations. This is when tribal members were officially enrolled (listed) as members of the tribe. This was done by the United States government. You had to be an enrolled tribal member to get an allotment of land. Many Caddo who did not want land or who refused to participate in an American Government controlled program did not enroll. People still argue today about who is and who is not a Caddo because of the Caddo who did not enroll. All the land that was not allotted, and there was a lot of it, was taken by the United States government and sold to the railroads and to white settlers.

Location in Oklahoma - Caddo Nation Complex is located East of Binger in Caddo county Oklahoma. The Caddo now visit Louisiana especially Natchitochese and Shreveport to see the places of their traditions.

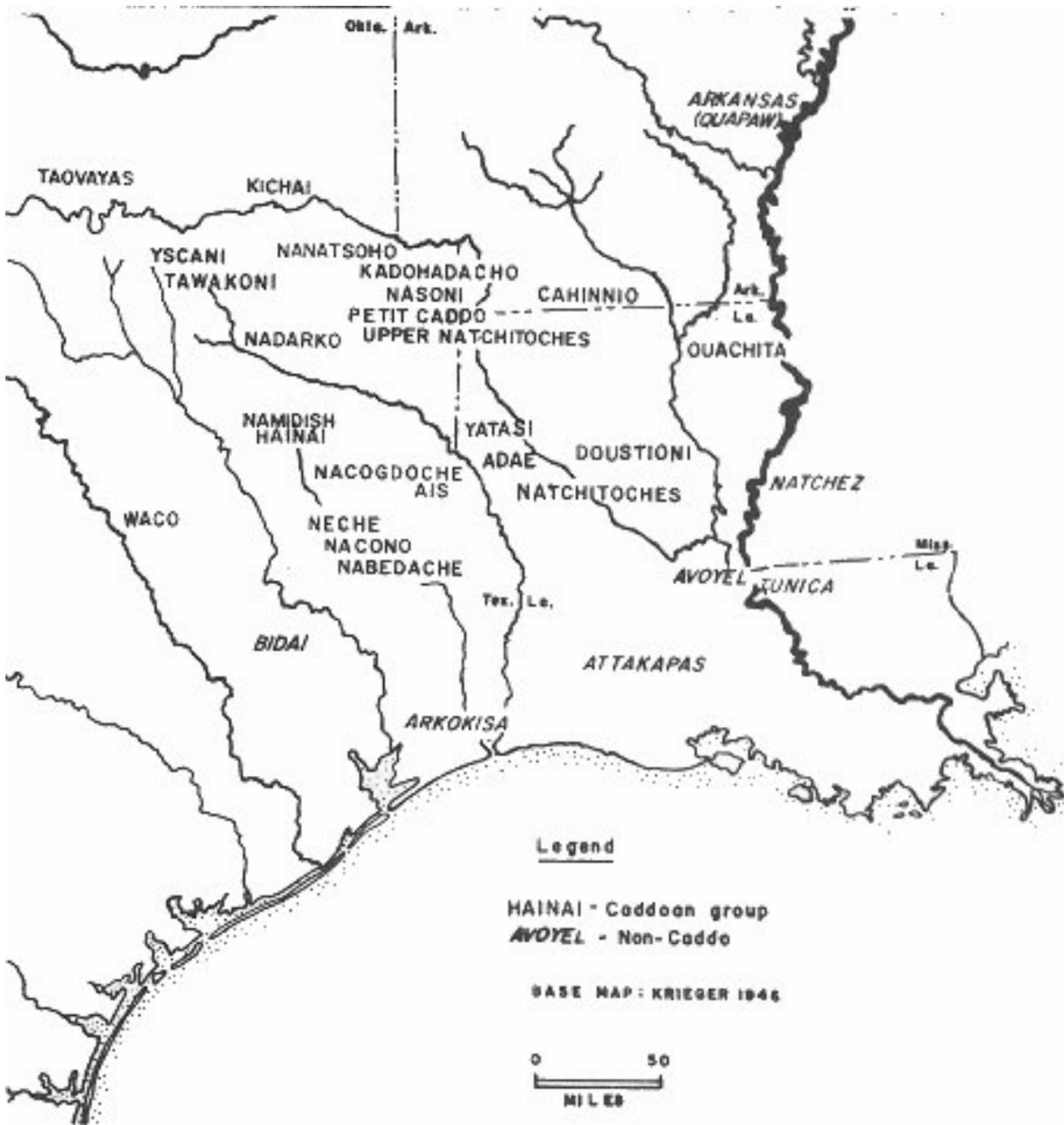


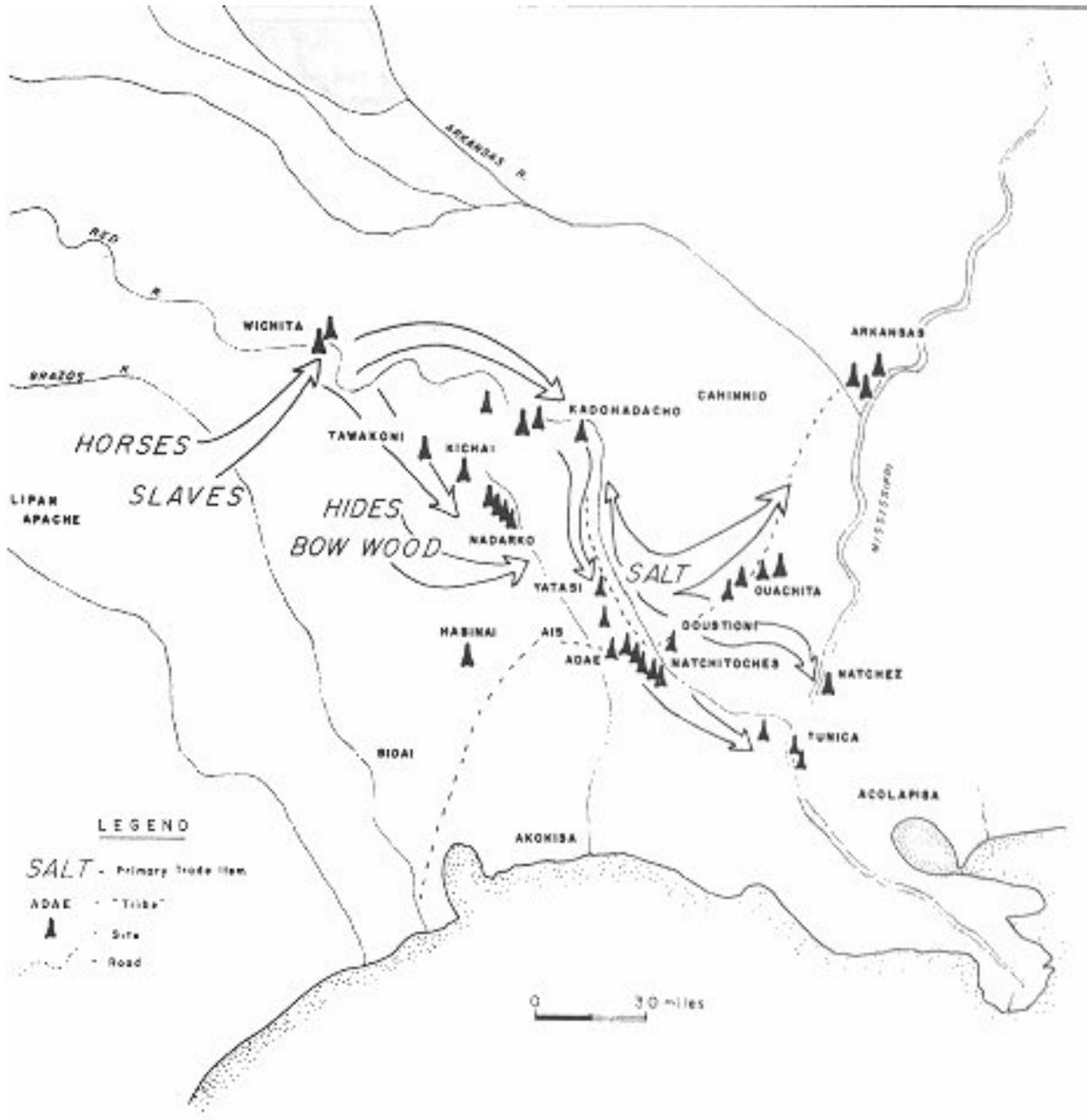


St. Denis and the Natchitoches Indians, 1714. Mural in Louisiana State Exhibit Museum, Shreveport. Photograph by Al Godoy



Maps



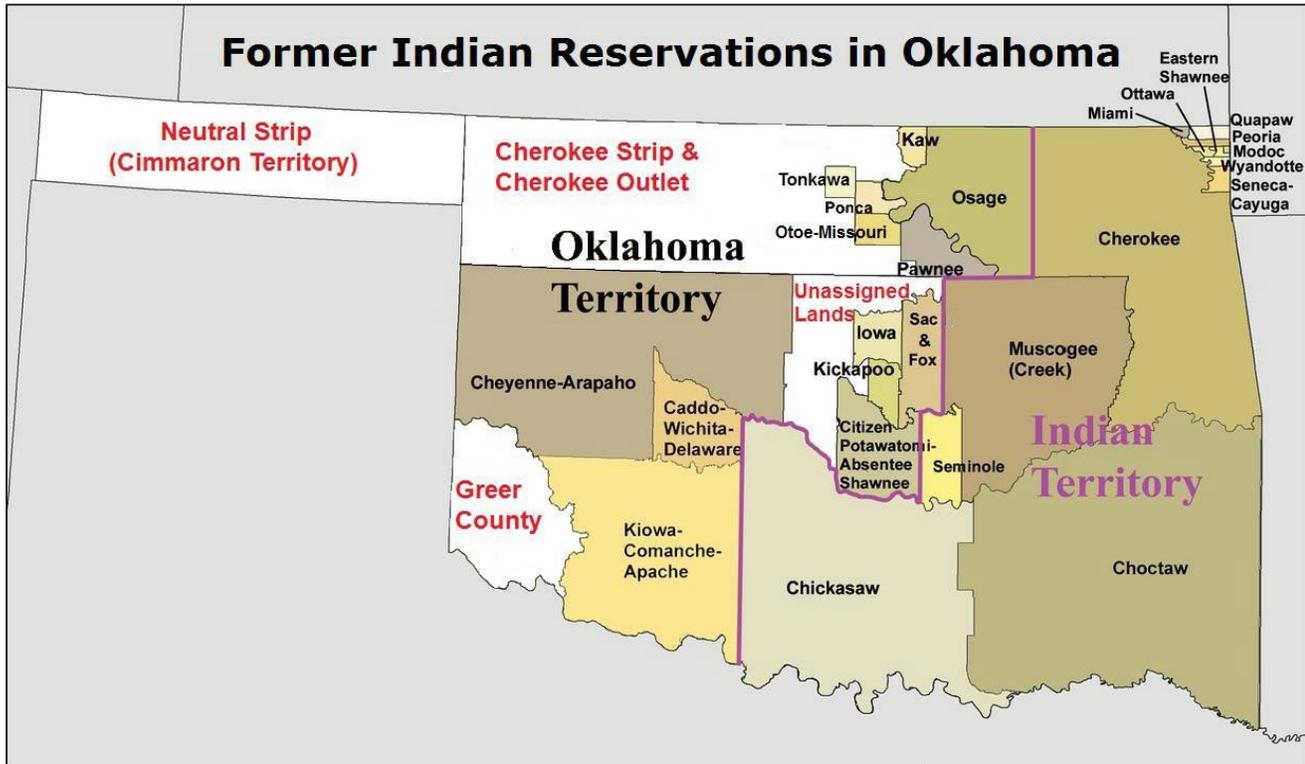


Caddoan interaction in the eighteenth century.



European settlements in the Caddoan area, eighteenth century.





Tribal Lands after 1830



Population Past/Present

- Total tribal enrollment: From a population in the 10's of thousands, the Caddo has declined through disease and starvation to around 4909 enrolled members as of October 2010.
- 5 Membership criteria: All living lineal descendants of allottee, of at least one-sixteenth degree Caddo Indian Blood, born after the date of the adoption of the Constitution (June 26, 1976).

Government: Chiefs vs Chairman, Elected or Paternal

- The Caddo Nation became an established government in 1938. The Tribal Council is composed of eight members: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Anadarko Representative, Binger Representative, Fort Cobb Representative and an Oklahoma City Representative. The Representatives come from four districts with high populations of Caddo people. While these Representatives are elected to represent their individual constituencies, they play an important part in making decisions for the entire tribe. Terms are for four years.
- Tribal Government leadership: The Caddo nation uses an 8 chair Tribal Council
 - Chairman: Bobby Gonzalez
 - Vice-Chairman: Kelly Howell Factor
 - Secretary: Jennifer Reeder
 - Treasurer: Verna Castillo
 - Anadarko Representative: Tracey Martine
 - Binger Representative: Travis Threlkeld
 - Fort Cobb Representative: Arlene Kay O'Neal
 - Oklahoma City Representative: Jennifer Wilson

Language Group

Caddo is the only surviving Southern Caddoan language of the Caddo language family. It is spoken by the Caddo Nation of Oklahoma. Today, only 25 elderly speakers are estimated to remain, none of whom are monolingual Caddo speakers, making Caddo a critically endangered language. There are several mutually intelligible dialects of Caddo; some of the more prominent dialects include Kadohadacho, Hasinai, Hainai, Natchitoches, and Yatasi. Today, the most commonly used dialects are Hasinai and Hainai. Caddo is linguistically related to the members of the Northern Caddoan language family; these include the Pawnee-Kitsai (Keechi) languages and Pawnee) and the Wichita language. Kitsai is now extinct, and Pawnee, Arikara, and Wichita each have fewer surviving speakers than Caddo does. Another language, Adai, is postulated to have been a Caddoan language



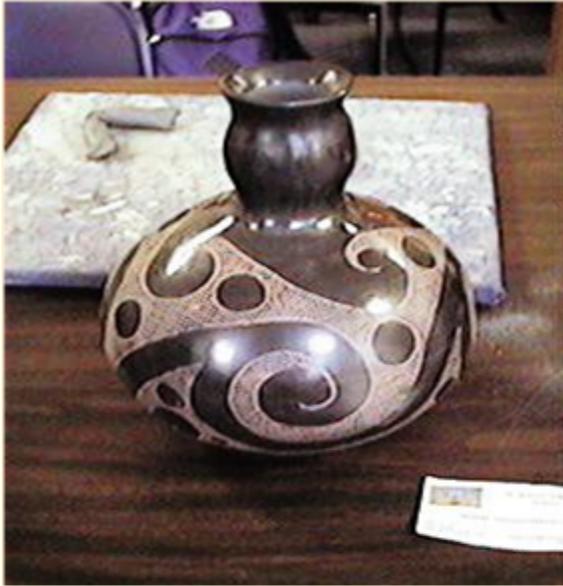
while it was extant, but because of scarce resources and the language's extinct status, this connection is not conclusive, and Adai is generally considered a language isolate.

Traditional Lifeways

- The Caddo were one of the earliest known to use the mounds to bury dead, celebrate lives, and honor offerings to spirits. Many of the mounds can be seen today in parks around Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi.
- Pottery has been an example of identification for the Caddo people; a unique design not only in the shape of the vessel, but also in exterior design and patterns.
- Caddo culture is also known for their great quantity of social dances and songs. With each type of dance that is performed other tribes may have one or two songs, the Caddo people have dozens.



Fine Arts



The Caddo made very beautiful pottery. Some of the pottery has elaborate decorations. Some of the pottery is decorated with designs engraved into the surface of the pots. On the left is a Caddo pot made by Jereldine Redcorn. Jeri is a Caddo woman who is trying to recreate the old ways of making pottery.



**Jereldine Redcorn
Holding a nice pot she made.**



Here is another Redcorn pot. Notice how shiny it is. She polishes the surface with a very smooth pebble. The design is etched into the surface. White or red clay is then rubbed into the engraved lines to make them stand out.



Significant Events



Current Tribal Information

