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# Domestic Built Environments in the Late Prehistoric Southeast North America

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## Résumé

Native American societies of the late prehistoric era (ca. 750-400 BP) in southeast North America correspond with elements of the late Neolithic in Eurasia, including the development of complex socio-political systems and a durable material culture in the form of elaborate and refined pottery production. A number of village sites in the Southern Appalachian region have been excavated, revealing the extents to which shared socio-cultural practices shaped the creation of the built environment and the partitioning and uses of spaces. Multiple approaches are required to analyze and interpret the built environment and the many domestic activity areas found around and within these spaces. Populating these models of late prehistoric households with dynamic, engendered agents of societal maintenance and change requires a disciplined and studied use of formal analogies. The works of architect Christopher Alexander is used to discern the pattern language for the built-environment at the scales of the chiefdom, village/town, house clusters, and individual houses. The patterns are the elements or archetypes from which a builder may choose when constructing a house, a town plan, or even a landscape. Within house clusters and domestic structures, GIS, statistical analyses, and ethnographic comparisons are employed to discern activity areas from the patterns of artifact distributions. Specifically, activities carried out in domestic structures for which there is artifactual evidence are discerned by examining classes of artifacts found in association with other classes of artifacts that might have been utilized during a particular activity. Lastly, ethnographically derived gender analogies are interrogated to reveal divisions of labor by gender. Gender analogies also serve as heuristic devices for exploring historical processes and gendered responses to them.

**Mots-Clés:** activity areas, house, household, gender, built environment, analogy

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